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CHRISTIAN TITLES:

A SERIES OF

PRACTICAL MEDITATIONS.

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ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, RECTORY, AND SUNDAY SCHOOL,

Stuyvesant Square.

CHRISTIAN TITLES:

A SERIES OF

Practical Meditations.

BY

STEPHEN H. TYNG, D.D.,
RECTOR OF ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, NEW YORK.

A Christian is the highest style of man.—Young.

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Introductory Notice.

This little work is composed of two of the author's annual series of daily familiar lectures in the season of Lent, delivered in the chapel of St. George's Church, in 1852 and 1853.

They are published to gratify those who daily heard them, and if the Lord will, to be an humble instrument of blessing to others.

They are affectionately dedicated to his own present beloved flock, and to the many equally beloved Christians who, in his former congregations, have heard the truth from him, and found it, as indeed it is, the word of God,—as a token of personal affection, —in the hope that they may be the means of edifying them all in the knowledge and love of Christ.

S. H. T.

ST. GEORGE'S RECTORY,
MARCH 1, 1853.

Christian Titles.

By what various names does the Lord describe his people in the Holy Scriptures! How important is the practical instruction to be derived from these divinely-appointed titles! Each of them has a distinct meaning. Each of them leads to a distinct line of practical meditation. Each of them presents a distinct view of human duty. Perhaps we can learn our peculiar duties as the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, in no way more clearly than by contemplating the names which he has been pleased to give us in his word. We shall know what we are, and what we ought to be, by faithfully considering what the Lord is pleased to call us. This is my present purpose. May the gracious Lord himself guide and teach us by his Holy Spirit!

Every different name or title by which a

Christian is described, leads to a particular practical obligation. I wish to consider some of the practical and personal thoughts and conclusions which flow from each. The object of such meditation is to aid us in walking worthy of our high vocation, and to encourage us to perfect holiness in the fear of God. No object could be more important. If God shall be pleased to bless us in this, no greater blessing can be bestowed. Thus shall we be made able to glorify the Saviour on earth,—to confess him in the world,—to honor him among men,—to walk in the light and joy of his countenance,—to be ready for his appearing,—to stand before him without fear.

Let us make these a daily meditation. Let us use them for a constant guide. Let the present series of thoughts be made an help to lay out and prepare others for ourselves, in the same method. Thus shall we acquire the habit of heavenly conversation, and cultivate that spiritual mind which is life and peace. Our meditations of our glorious Lord shall be sweet. And in the multitude of our thoughts within us, his comforts shall delight our soul.

First Meditation.

INTRODUCTORY.

"What manner of persons ought ye to be?"—2 PETER, III. 11.

A MOST important question! When God proposes it to me, I ought seriously to consider it. I will consider it as presented to myself,—I will try to apply it thoroughly to myself. How appropriate it is! How much there is contained in it! It speaks to me as a servant of Christ,—as in the world, though not of the world. It arrays before me all my privileges, opportunities, and responsibilities. It reminds me how elevated is my position, how great are my advantages,—how solemn and impressive is the prospect of my account. It is the voice of God which speaks in it, from

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whom all my privileges are derived, and to whom my account is to be given. If I am faithful and sincere in my use of it, and my thoughts upon it, and my efforts arising out of it, he will help me,—he will forgive me,—he will accept me, through the riches of a Saviour's grace and merit.

What manner of person ought I to be? That must depend,

FIRST,—*Upon who I am.*

The same deportment and conduct does not become all alike, nor belong alike to all. The same great principles of love to God, and faith in God, and submission to God, must belong to all creatures whom he has made. But particular and different duties grow out of these principles. What is proper for one may not be proper for another. The question is then, Who am I? My conduct must be adapted to my condition. The claims upon me must be regulated by the character which I bear. Am I guilty or innocent in myself? Am I holy or unholy before God? Am I solitary and

private, or public and responsible in my relations to man? Am I living only in the present, or have I a life hereafter also? If I am a sinner, guilty but pardoned,—redeemed,—called to be a saint,—brought into peace and communion with God in Christ,—having the Spirit of God to dwell in me, and to lead me,—then, what manner of person ought I to be? To know this, let me consider the names and titles, by which it has pleased God to describe me.

It must depend,

SECOND,—*Upon where I am.* The same deportment does not become all stations. I cannot be the same manner of person in every place alike. If I am at home, or abroad,—if I am alone, or in company,—if I am with friends, or with enemies,—a different line of conduct may become me, and may be expected of me. The same great principles of truth and duty must govern me everywhere. But new occasions for their exercise call for different exhibitions and displays of them. How import-

ant is it for me to consider where I am! What eyes are upon me? Who is watching me? And with what mind and feelings? I am in the midst of temptations; in a world in which there is but little that harmonizes with my spiritual character or growth. I am encompassed with difficulties and besetting sins. If there are many who sympathize with me, there are many also who oppose me. I am in a season of trial, and every part of my life is a part of my trial; I am in a journey, and my home is before me; I am in a warfare, and my master's eye is upon me. Then what manner of person ought I to be? Can I be careless upon the subject? or feel that it is not important for me to consider it?

It must depend,

THIRD,—*Upon what I have to do.* Am I at my own disposal? Or do I belong to another? Have I full control over myself, or have I important obligations to discharge to others? If my time and talents, and means and powers, are all my own, I have the right to do with

them as I please. But if they have all been bestowed upon me, then for what purpose were they given? May I eat and drink, and follow my own gratification, and feel no responsibility for my days of self-indulgence? Or have I a dispensation to discharge, a mission to fulfil? For what end have I been sent into the world? The question must much depend upon this. I have no right to be an idle person, if God has given me a special work to accomplish. I cannot yield to levity and trifling, if I have grave and serious duties to fulfil. I cannot make temporal things my object, if I have eternal results dependent upon them to secure. I must therefore reflect upon the great work which is given me to do. Consider the undertaking and employment divinely appointed, and in which I am engaged by God's command, and try to fulfil the work confided to me faithfully. But if I am a messenger, a servant, an agent of the glorious Lord who made me and redeemed me, and have a season in which I must finish my work, and then be called to

give my account of this work, then what manner of person ought I to be?

It must depend,

FOURTH,—*Upon the advantages I enjoy.* These must decide my responsibility, and measure my obligations. To whom much is given, from them will be much required. The same course of conduct cannot be expected from the ignorant and the intelligent,—or the rich and the poor,—or the Christian and the heathen alike. If I am richly endowed with benefits, I am in proportion responsible. If I have received a clear description and knowledge of my duty, I cannot be sheltered by the excuse of want of knowledge. The poor Pagan, or the wretched victims of human neglect in Christian lands, will stand upon their own ground. They will receive much mercy in the estimation of their life. But I have heard the Gospel. I have clearly known its truth. I have been made acquainted with its commands. I well know the advantages of obedience to them. I cannot be deceived by

the pleas of indifference or unbelief. I have every opportunity and means to obey the will of God, and to glorify his name. Then what manner of person ought I to be?

It must depend,

FIFTH,—*Upon the results of the whole.* Has my conduct any connection with the future? Are there any issues hereafter that must depend upon it? This is a most important consideration. If I am living only for my earthly day, or if I have another state of account and recompense, which is to be decided by this,—my course may be justly very different. Ah! if I am really hastening forward to a day of judgment,—if I am to meet an hour, when every thought of my heart shall be exposed, and according to my character here, my eternity is to be,—if my future everlasting experience is to be inseparably connected with my present course, and decided by it; then, what manner of person ought I to be? What earnestness and watchfulness becomes me! How anxious ought I to be to be found ac-

ceptable in the end! It is a serious thing, it may be a fearful thing, to fall into the hands of the living God. There will be no discharge in that war. Let me lay it solemnly to heart; and while I have opportunity, prepare to meet my God.

Eternity! tremendous word
To souls unpardoned and abhorred;
But O, if God and heaven be mine,
How sweet the accents,—how divine!

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Meditation Second.

CHOSEN GENERATION.

Ye are a Chosen Generation.—1 Peter, ii. 9.

Each particular title of the people of God has a practical import of its own. When God has been pleased to give us so many distinct and peculiar names, it is that we may consider our obligations as they are thus expressed, and regulate our characters and lives accordingly.

These several titles may be arranged under several distinct classes. They display the *origin*, the *relations*, the *characters*, the *privileges*, the *prospects*, of the servants and followers of Christ.

The present title comes under the first head. It describes the origin of our Christian state and character. It takes us back to the grace

which has been manifested to us before the world began. It shows us that all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and then hath sent to us the word of reconciliation. Let me consider the practical importance of this great fact—Am I one of a chosen generation? Then, I would consider,

First, *Who hath chosen me.* God hath chosen me. All my hopes and privileges come from this one source,—of his own love, wherewith he loved me before the foundation of the world. With what gratitude I ought to think of him—with what confidence and affection I ought to regard him! It was not I that sought him; but he that sought me. This is a blessed remembrance to me. My character and hope spring not from my feeble will, but from his abounding grace. They stand not in my weakness; but in his eternal strength. Do I love him? Have I sought him? Do I delight to pray to him? Is it my real desire to obey him? All these are

the result of his choice. Every plant that can bear good fruit in me, my heavenly Father hath planted. Let me never fail to give him the glory and praise for his work.

I would consider,

SECOND, *Why he hath chosen me.* It was for no excellence of mine. I was not, when his choice was made. When I came into being, it was in sin and death. My nature was corrupt. There was no prospect of good from me. There could have been no motive in any excellence to be found in one so sinful. Not for any good thing I could ever do for him. I could have no good, but from his gift. He could make all the instruments he needed, as well as the end he desired. He could never depend upon me to bring out his ends. No. It was his own will.—His own grace and love. I can assign no other reason than this. He had mercy, because he would have mercy. There has never been anything in me, but obstacles and objections to his work. I ought to think of this with deep humility, with en-

tire renunciation of myself. I ought to give him all the glory, both for his choice, and for all that shall come out of it. My own sinfulness shuts out every reason for his goodness to me, but his own mercy. I can never have anything of my own, in which to glory.

I would consider,

THIRD, *For what purposes he hath chosen me.* To honor himself. To show forth his own glory. He means to show in me his grace, and love, and power to save. He will display this in my present life of trial. He will display it in my future life of glory. How earnestly, then, ought I to watch. How carefully ought I to walk, that I may honor him. It must be my effort, in all the fruits of holy action, to glorify him. I am never off of duty in this respect. Every part of my life has some connection with his great design. Every step is a part of his plan. Let no part oppose it. When I am obedient, I fulfil his will and further his design. When I am disobedient, I dishonor him and violate his pur-

pose. O, with what vigilance ought I to walk with him, and before him, that my whole life may carry out the purpose for which I was made! This will be happiness to me, as it passes. There is no other happiness for man. This will be happiness after it has passed. My eternity can be happy, only as he reigns in it supremely, accomplishing all his will.

I would consider,

FOURTH, *For what results he hath chosen me.* Surely this is for everlasting glory. He can have no inferior end to this. The end is eternal life. Then my hope ought to be clear and constant. God has chosen me to salvation. This will encourage me to press forward,—to contend faithfully. I cannot be overcome. No weapon that is formed against me can prosper. O let me never faint then. My present pilgrimage may be full of trial and pain. In the world I must have tribulation. But God my Saviour will carry me safely through. He will make me more than a conqueror. And then his rest remains. How

glorious will be the result! How satisfied shall I be, when I awake up after his likeness, and behold his glory.

I would consider,

FIFTH, *Hath God thus chosen me?* The evidence of it is in my own character and state. I should never have sought him but for that. I was far off, when he brought me nigh. It was he who made me seek his face, and his favor. My choice of Christ is the evidence of Christ's choice of me. It is a very precious evidence. For I really choose him. Nothing seems to me so important, as an interest in my Saviour, and a partnership with him. How willingly would I part with everything rather than this. How rich and full should I feel myself with this alone. O what mercy has thus been bestowed upon me! How grateful, how humble, how watchful, how hopeful, I ought to be, as one of God's chosen generation! Let me strive to grow in this blessed character, and in these heavenly fruits. Thus my walk will be peaceful and successful.

And the God of hope will fill me with all joy and peace in believing, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

What thousands never knew the road!
What thousands hate it when 'tis known!
None but the chosen tribes of God
Will seek or choose it for their own.

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Meditation Third.

ELECT OF GOD.

The Elect of God.—Colossians, iii. 12.

This is the result of the divine choice. As one of a chosen generation, I am actually the elect of God. How wonderful is such a title! How glorious is such a relation! How inconceivable to me, the love which has conferred it upon one so guilty, and so unprofitable! What encouraging and blessed thoughts does such a title suggest! Let me meditate upon them, and strive to improve and employ them.

If I am really the elect of God,

First. Then *God has greatly loved me*, and I also ought to love him. The only motive which

can lead to choice is love. If God has thus chosen me, how great must have been his love! When I think of my own unworthiness, guiltiness, and ruin,—how repulsive my whole character must have been to him, who cannot look upon iniquity but with abhorrence; how great is the love wherewith he hath loved me, to pass over all these reasons for his aversion! When I think of the boundless extent of his mercies, his glorious salvation, the forbearing grace and tenderness which he has displayed, the promises which he has given me, and the provisions which he has made for me, how amazing has been his love! What earnest, devoted love he deserves in return from me! Surely I can never love him too much. My best offerings must always be cold and worthless. My most ardent praise can never reach the measure of his claims. But nothing can move or excite my love, like a conviction and knowledge of his love first to me. O that I might realize it and think of it more!

SECOND. Then *God will certainly protect me*, and I ought to depend upon him. If he is able to guard that which he has loved and chosen, he will certainly do it. But he is infinitely able. No power is beyond his control. No enemy can successfully resist him. All things are in his hands. All things are open to his sight. How safe am I, then, in doing his will, wherever he shall lead me! With perfect confidence I ought to depend upon him, and go forward in the path of duty without fear. Every place is safe, where he requires me to be. How happy is the spirit of daily constant dependence! To trust always. To have no fears. To rest all upon God. To feel sure of his protection. This is the privilege of God's elect. This is my privilege. Let me daily try to enjoy and improve it.

THIRD, Then *God will surely watch me*, and I ought to strive in everything to please him. If I am one of his elect, what I do, and where I am, can never be indifferent to him. His

eye must be always upon his elect. He says, "To this man will I look." He lives in them. Their character is always an honor or a dishonor to him. A weed that a man will neglect in a common, he will not suffer in his garden. God will more surely correct the faults of his elect, than of others. "You only have I known," he says, "of all the people of the earth, therefore will I punish you for your iniquities." In the assurance of this, how careful and earnest ought I to be! How circumspectly ought I to walk; in all things conformed to his will. Seeking at all times to understand, and to follow his commands. Let me daily strive to set him before me, and to do those things which please him.

FOURTH, Then *God will certainly provide for me*, and I ought to confide in him entirely. He is able to supply all my needs here and hereafter. He can give me grace and glory. He will withhold no good thing from me. Then let me have no carefulness for this life, and no

despair or despondency about another. Let me press forward in my heavenly way, walk humbly with my God, and find all my peace and hope in him. If he is my portion, it is enough. I cannot want. He will prepare an habitation for his elect. He will himself be a strong tower of defence for them. There I may be permitted to come with all boldness,—to run and be safe. I have no cause for fear or doubt. God hath become my salvation. I will trust and not be afraid. The work which he begins he is able to complete; and he will complete it. O how precious is the assurance of his unfailing love in Christ Jesus my Lord!

FIFTH, Then *how unspeakable is this privilege!* To be loved, protected, watched, provided for, by God himself! When I think of such a title, let me feel its incitement to duty. How can I be listless, or prayerless, or wandering, or rebellious, when I have such privileges and such hopes. As the elect of God, let me be

deeply humble, not proud or self-confident. Let me seek the constant guidance and teaching of his Holy Spirit. He says he will put his Spirit upon his elect. They shall be holy as he is holy. Let me walk ever in the Spirit, quietly, gratefully trusting in my God. He loved me before the foundation of the world. He will love me with an everlasting love. If I am faithful to him, nothing will separate me from his love.

My name from the palms of his hands
Eternity will not erase;
Engraved on his heart it remains
In marks of indelible grace.

Meditation Fourth.

BOUGHT WITH A PRICE.

Ye are bought with a price.—1 Corinthians, vi. 20.

This describes another step in the origin of Christian character. The chosen generation, having become the elect of God, are bought with a price. They were under condemnation in sin. They were under a curse in guilt. God gave his own Son, to be made a curse in their stead. He took their nature and their guilt upon himself. He became the substitute and the sacrifice for them. He was accepted in their behalf. He endured the curse and the punishment of their transgressions. He bought them with his own blood. Now they are ransomed—redeemed. They are a purchased possession. Bought with a price. No title is dearer to a Christian than this. Every hope

depends upon it. Every blessing arises out of it. When God hath chosen me, and hath purchased me,—how great is the blessing I have received!

FIRST. Then *I have complete forgiveness*, and I ought to trust in it, and be at peace. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin,—What should I fear? His gracious death for me is all-sufficient. I cannot need anything more. I ought not to desire anything more. By one sacrifice, he hath perfected forever those who are sanctified. This is complete redemption. What can I desire besides? When I was an enemy God reconciled me. This is enough. This is grace, wherein I may stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. I may look up with confidence. I may look forward with hope. He hath triumphed for me. He hath borne my sins; and no guilt will be laid to my charge. How boundless is this provision of merit and of mercy. Let me prize it, embrace it, and enjoy it.

SECOND. Then *I am no longer my own.* I have no right to my own will. That which is sold is no longer his who sold it. I was sold a slave to sin. But I have been bought again, a servant for God. I have now no right to control my own affairs,—to decide my own destiny,—to mark out my own ways. The enemy hath no right to control or govern me. I have no ground of complaint in any of the Lord's dealings with me. Wherefore should a living man complain? If God has made me alive, why should I murmur at anything he does? Should it be according to my mind? If I suffer, or am distressed, or reproached, it is not my business. I am not my own. Why should I rebel, or be anxious, or dissatisfied? Cannot God take care of his own? Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Let me cease from myself. There is no good thing there.

THIRD. Then *I am the property of God,* and his will must be obeyed. He is Supreme. I must

submit to him entirely. This is my happiness, as well as my duty. I am to learn his will in his word, and by his providence. And whether it is what he commands, or what he does, it is the same. He cannot do wrong with me. He cannot be unjust to me. I belong entirely to him. He has the right to do what he will with his own. He will do what seemeth best in his sight. That which seemeth best to him, must be best for me. O, how happy is this spirit of complete submission! Sweet submission! Simple, unquestioning obedience! How perfectly clear and direct it is! It has no questions to ask,—no doubts to settle,—no difficulties to solve. It seeks only to know what is the mind of God. That is enough. When he speaks, there is an end of all controversy. His word must be right; and it must come out right.

FOURTH. Then *I am the servant of God*, and his work must be done. All the powers of my being belong to him. My mind and my body

are equally his. My outward circumstances are under his control. These are the instruments with which I am to act. They furnish the scene, the occasion, in which I am to glorify him. In this condition he has a distinct work for me to do, and I must do it. He will show me if I ask him, and wait for him, what it is, and where it is. I cannot judge of this work. It may be a very important one in his plans, though it seem to be a very lowly one for me. I must not judge according to the appearance. He will judge righteous judgment. Let me not refuse his appointment. Let me not delay to follow his voice. Let me waste no time in fulfilling his will. I know not what consequences may depend upon it. I only know that I am the servant of a Redeeming God, and his work must be finished, and I must instantly and constantly do my part of it.

FIFTH. Is this indeed *my* relation to God? Am I thus pardoned—not my own, the property of God, the servant of God? Am I all this,

through the death of a gracious Saviour in my behalf? Surely I ought never to forget it! The remembrance of it should mark my whole course and career. In all that I do, I should act upon the high principles which are thus brought out to view. How elevated and happy will this make my life! With what light and joy will it adorn all the dispensations of God concerning me! O let this precious title, "bought with a price," thus ever constrain and guide me.

Ten thousand worlds, ten thousand lives,
How worthless they appear!
Compared with thee supremely good,
Divinely bright and fair!

Meditation Fifth.

HIS WORKMANSHIP.

We are His workmanship.—EPHESIANS, ii. 10.

WHEN I look at the outward privileges of the Gospel which are bestowed upon me, they are all the results of God's amazing grace. He chose me for himself. He made me his elect. He bought me with a price. And it is most delightful and encouraging to reflect upon the amazing goodness of God in these wonderful gifts. But when I proceed to look at the work which is to be accomplished within myself, all things are still equally of God. The presence and the power of his Spirit is the fountain of all holiness and strength. This is the origin of religious character within me. All my duties are his gifts.

When I repent, and believe, and love, it is because he has before bestowed upon me these inestimable blessings. He first gives to me, and then he asks of me that which he has given. When I ask, how am I to obey him, and to do his will; He answers me, by telling me I am his workmanship. He will make me to do it. He will work within me to will and to do according to his good pleasure.

Am I thus the workmanship of God?

First. How constantly ought *I to depend upon his power*, and not my own. Vainly shall I contend and strive, unless he work within me. But when he undertakes the work, there is no difficulty. I would resist the power of sin, I would walk in holiness of life, I would fulfil the claims of duty, I would honor him in all the fruits of piety. But I must remember his grace and look to him. He speaks, and it is done. He alone can make me what he would have me to be. This makes every path a privilege. Whatever he requires becomes a

blessing, when he is pleased to work it within me. How precious are these gifts! Godly sorrow, true repentance, affectionate submission, active obedience; all these are his works within me, who thus perfects the counsel of his own will. Let me learn to look up to him for all I desire or try to do.

SECOND. How earnestly ought *I to seek his grace* with constant prayer. Effectual inwrought prayer! This is the great instrument of prevailing, and of conquest. That which is impossible for me, is possible for him. He will never allow me to seek his face in vain. I would resolve to stand with him. I would determine and endeavor in everything to follow him. Then I would seek his constant aid and presence to uphold me. He will always hear me, and will give abundantly. O, how important becomes such a habit of prayer, in simple dependence on God! It is not merely in set and occasional prayers—these are my privilege and my duty—but the frequent and constant

lifting up of my heart and thoughts to God, in secret remembrance and desire. My trials and conflicts may come suddenly. The work of grace must always go forward in my heart. I need therefore to have a constant remembrance of God, as the author of every good work within me. Let me never forget they are not my works, but the works of God. Without him I can do nothing.

THIRD. How watchfully ought I to *guard against quenching his Spirit*, when he is pleased to give it to me. He will not work upon me, as a mere inanimate mass. He must work with me, as a voluntary and accountable being. He gives me light, and knowledge of my duty. He makes me to see my sin. He shows me the path of holiness and obedience. He makes me desire it and love it. He excites and urges me to fulfil his will. Then, when all these blessed gifts are offered, I must not reject his grace, nor trifle with his love. I must not engage in habits which oppose him;

nor refuse, nor delay to yield to him. This is most important for me. He makes me willing in the day of his power; let me not resist his will. He speaks in my inmost heart and conscience; let me never be indifferent to his blessed voice. He gives me his Holy Spirit; let me never grieve nor despise him.

FOURTH. How anxiously should *I improve the opportunities of his grace.* He may not always aid me. He will not always. If I neglect him, he may suddenly depart. I ought then, to welcome his coming. I ought to rejoice in his readiness to help and succor me. Every season of grace is precious. Every means of obtaining his divine influence is inestimable. Ah, I cannot afford to waste any. I have no time or room to trifle with any. Immediate obedience to his voice, instant submission to his command, perfect delight in his appearing, is my only course of safety,—the only path of peace. When I hear him speaking in his word, or feel his arresting or awakening power

in my conscience, I must yield at once. He has hallowed his Sabbaths. He has provided his sanctuary for worship. He has given me my closet or my corner, for secret prayer. He has collected the assembly of his saints, and promised to be with them. He sanctifies the days of affliction and trial. O let me hasten to meet him, to find him, to enjoy his presence, to experience his power, to obtain and improve his gifts. Thus will his gracious workmanship go on, and I shall rejoice in the work of his hands.

FIFTH. How *precious* and *important* is this title! My due improvement of it will lead me to depend on God the Spirit, and not to refuse him; to seek his presence, to be jealous lest I grieve him; to welcome every opportunity of his manifestation, that I may profit with all. I would apply this blessed truth thus to myself:—How precious is his workmanship, as it goes on! How perfect and glorious will it be, when it is completed! How perfectly satisfied

shall I be, when I awake up after his likeness. Then shall I rejoice in it, and in him forever.

Descend from heaven, immortal dove,
  Stoop down and take me on thy wings,
And mount and bear me far above
  The reach of these inferior things!

Meditation Sixth.

A NEW CREATURE.

He is a new creature.—Corinthians, v. 17.

This is the result of the workmanship of God. He makes me what he would have me to be. And when his work is finished, old things have passed away; behold all things have become new. It is a blessed title. The Christian is a new creature. The Saviour died in his place, and he died in him. Thus his condemnation, burden, and punishment have all passed by. All things in his relations and his prospects have been made new. And the Holy Spirit has come to him, to teach him these glad tidings; has awakened him, transformed him, renewed him, made him alive by their power, and alive to God forever. Thus

in his own character and state, his motives, purposes, and plan of life, all things have become new. This is true of every Christian. If I am a Christian, this is true of me.

Let me think of it as belonging to me.

First. *I am not what I once was.* This is a great comfort. Feeble and imperfect as I am, I can look back and see a very different state, and a very sad state, which has passed away. Then I was indifferent to religion, and careless about my soul. I am not so now. Then the service of God seemed to me a task and a burden. It does not so now. Then I was without prayer or a desire to pray. I am not so now. Then I was extremely anxious about earthly things, and my whole heart was there. It is not so now. Then I had no desire to live for God. I did not feel the burden of my inward sin. The prospect of eternity did not interest or alarm me. Ah, all these are not so now! I am not what I was. This change is the work of the Spirit, beyond all doubt. I could never

have wrought it myself. I was dead; I could not bring myself to life. It is all new. I well remember when I had it not. This is a great comfort to me. Though I mourn over my great sinfulness, and feel it deeply; though I see myself in everything very far from what I ought to be; still I have great comfort in looking back upon the past. I cannot doubt that God hath done all this for my soul.

SECOND. Then *he who has thus created me anew, will keep me, and finish his work.* This is a great encouragement to me. My difficulties are many: far more than I can overcome. My inward corruptions defy my power to conquer them. If I were to depend upon myself, I should be completely discouraged. But surely God will never forsake me. If he had intended my destruction, he would have left me where I was. I was destroyed; lost in sin. He does nothing without a purpose. His gifts are without his subsequent repentance. His works reveal his mind. Every blessing I have

received, is an argument for what he means to do for me, and with me. This greatly encourages me. He is on my side. Why should I fear? I will press forward in the path of duty. I will be faithful and patient in every trial. I will be steadfast and determined in every contest. I will be unchanging in my perseverance through the whole. I know that he will never forsake me. He will not despise, nor reject the work of his own hands. He who hath begun a good work in me, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. This hope abideth steadfast.

THIRD. But *I am not what I ought to be*, and this should keep me humble and watchful. My privileges are great. My opportunities and means are most valuable and important. Ah, how improved and sanctified my whole life ought to be! But what evil tempers still lurk within me! What unholiness still abides! What sinful affections are still here! How far am I from that holy, heavenly mind which I

ought to possess! How little have I of that mind of Christ, which was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sin! All this should humble me greatly. I am very far behind what I might have been. I see many who have entirely outstripped me in the Christian race. I think of the blessings I might have conferred upon others, of the example I might have presented, of the influence I might have exercised. I am distressed when I call these things to remembrance. I abhor myself as a defiler and corrupter of the precious gifts of God which I have received. But this should make me also more watchful. I am not straitened in God. He is willing to bestow boundless gifts upon me. O, that I may come to him for more! Let me daily strive to live more as a new creature; and in everything to show forth the work of the Spirit in my heart.

FOURTH. But then *I shall be all that God intends for me;* and this supports me. But for this I should verily faint. He will not leave me nor

forsake me. He will bring me into light and obedience, and entire conformity to himself. Whatever are my infirmities, my faults, or doubts, if I still cleave to him, he will carry on his work. I shall behold his face in holiness, and be renewed after his image, and rejoice in the completion of his work. This blessed prospect keeps me up. Unholy tempers are not forever. Enemies do not arise eternally. If I contend, I shall conquer. If I strive, I shall attain. If I endure, I shall receive the reward. God hath provided far better things for me, and hath revealed them to me. He has bid me look up for a coming deliverance, and rejoice in the prospect of his glory. As his new creature, he will yet make all things new for me. I shall be his forever.

FIFTH. How *important* is this title! As I think of it, and the grace which has bestowed it, how it tends to comfort me with my past deliverance; to encourage me with my divine supporter; to subdue and humble me with a

sense of my deficiencies; and to support and animate me with my future prospects. O let me not come short of what the Lord designs and requires! His thoughts concerning me are thoughts of peace, and not of evil. Let me daily grow in his favor, and in the knowledge of him. Thus shall his work be completed at last, and he will rejoice over it; and he that reapeth, and he that soweth, will rejoice together.

Yet not unsought, nor unimplored,
The plenteous grace will I confer.
No: your whole heart shall seek the Lord—
I'll put a praying spirit there.

Meditation Seventh.

CHILDREN OF GOD

We are the Children of God.—Romans, viii. 16.

I would pass from the titles which describe the origin of the Christian character, to some of those which describe the Christian's relations. There are many of these. He stands in various relations to other beings. None can be more important than his relations to God. These I would first consider. One of these, exceedingly important and precious, is here described. Children of God! How interesting, how impressive is the thought! How much love it displays on the part of God! "Behold what manner of love," St. John says. How great and inestimable the privilege on our part! What blessings or gifts does a

father deny a son, which are within his reach, and are proper for him to receive? What limit is there to the goodness or the wisdom of God, in dealing with his children? Let me think of this blessed title, as belonging to me. Am I a child of God? I became so by his gracious adoption of me, in his Son. He thus of his own grace is pleased to make me one of his family.

FIRST. Then I ought to have *the most affectionate spirit of gratitude* to God who has bestowed the privilege and the gift. Whatever earthly things I may want, this is a blessing which must always call for my gratitude, and for the expression of my gratitude to God. As a child of God, the prevailing temper of my mind ought to be thankfulness. Rejoice in the Lord alway,—in everything give thanks. When I do rejoice, let it not be so much in inferior things. Let it be in this highest and best of all gifts. In whatever earthly state I may be, how amazing is the change from my

low and guilty condition to be called a child of God. As my Father, I would think of him and love him. This makes all his dispensations precious. His connections become dear to me. His rod is exercised with the most tender affection. His smiles and his comforts abound upon me. I may always see his sun,—and breathe his air,—and partake of his grace,—and enjoy his forgiveness,—and walk in his presence. How can I ever be unhappy? How can my heart ever be any but a thankful heart?

SECOND. Then I ought to *exercise the most entire confidence* in my Heavenly Father. He cannot do me any wrong. He must bless me always. All things must work together for good, to those whom he loves and calls. If he has adopted me into his family, he will surely bless me, and I ought therefore ever to trust in him. I cannot understand all his plans. How should I? His ways are not as my ways. They are far above, out of my sight. But his purposes

I thoroughly know. The thoughts which he thinketh concerning me, are only good. In this I must have entire trust. If I walk in darkness, and have no light, I must still stay upon my God. It becomes the spirit of a child to have confidence in a father. What father can be so worthy of confidence as he? He will hold me by my right hand. He will lead me safely through the waters. He will bring me to his house in peace. He will not forsake me. Let me never withdraw from him my entire and affectionate trust. He has made me his child. He will enable me to know him and prove him as a Father, in all his discipline with me.

THIRD. Then I ought to *cultivate the most complete submission* to his will. I am not yielding to a Ruler who is mighty merely, but to a Father who is tender. I do not submit to the voice of mere authority, but to the expressions and demands of the most unexampled love. Does he rule in everything? Is he everywhere

mighty and faithful? Let me in everything entirely and immediately submit. O, I would have no will! No rebellion against his will. I would have little choice,—little desire to choose. I would allow him to govern in all things concerning me. How happy shall I be when every contentious spirit is subdued, and my whole heart is brought into perfect subjection to him. This is heaven. This will be heaven for me forever. This would be heaven even here. Let me earnestly strive to gain it; and in the spirit of complete submission, really have my heaven begun below.

FOURTH. Then I ought to be earnestly and constantly careful *to honor my Father's name.* It is a most serious matter to stand in such a relation to the Great God of heaven and earth. What reverence becomes me! What holiness! What blamelessness! What usefulness! What likeness to his image! I would watch for this, and seek for it continually. He has prepared the way. He has revealed the character

he loves. His Spirit is ready to bestow it. He will lead, and help, and bless me. O let me not be wanting in efforts to do his will. The world will judge of him by me. What I am, will be in their view the standard of what he does, and of what he requires. Ah, if they should reject him for my sake, what could I say? If his name shall be blasphemed through my carelessness or neglect, how can I stand before him? It may be so. It is very likely to be so. Then let me strive to glorify and honor him, in every walk of life, by the utmost fidelity to his service.

FIFTH. As a child of God, these attributes ought *always* to be found in me,—Gratitude, Confidence, Submission, Holiness. These are the marks of his children. They especially become me. I desire to obtain and exhibit them. I would cultivate a filial spirit. I would walk as a child of God. Soon my Father will call his children home. Their wanderings will all be finished. Their work will be all com-

pleted. Their trials all accomplished. Let me be ready for that hour, and happy when that hour shall arrive. This is my privilege. I will make it my purpose and my constant effort.

What transport then shall fill my heart,
When thou my worthless name shalt own;
When I shall see thee as thou art,
And know as I myself am known;
From sin and fear, and sorrow free,
My soul shall find its rest in thee.

Meditation Eighty.

HEIRS OF GOD.

Heirs of God.—Romans, viii. 17.

This is a wonderful relation. An heir hopes for an inheritance which he has not yet received. Or he has received an inheritance from some friend who has already departed. Every earthly inheritance is connected with a consciousness of sorrow. Though we have gained in property, we have lost a friend. But the Christian's inheritance has no sorrow connected with it. God is the portion of his inheritance. He is so in this life. He will be so forever in the life to come. This heavenly inheritance is bestowed upon us when we are truly born into the family of God, as his dear children. We gain its complete

enjoyment when an earthly life has passed away, and we have an abundant entrance into his glorious kingdom. An heir of God, is a title full of encouragement and instruction. It describes the glorious prospect and privilege of the children of God. If children, then heirs. Am I an heir of God?

First. Then I have a glorious home, and I ought to be *perfectly contented with my earthly lot.* Wherever I am in my present condition, I am just where God my Father has placed me. I have all that he has thought best to give me. It is enough. I have a right daily to improve my condition, if I can, in perfect accordance with his will. But I have no right to be dis-contented with it. Why should I be? It is but a temporary arrangement for me. To-day is; to-morrow is not. Contentment and submission differ. Submission refers to the authority under which I am placed, and yields to that. Contentment refers to the possession which I have, and is satisfied with that, during the time

of its appointment, and for the purpose of its appointment. What happiness and peace contentment brings to the mind! If I look upward from my present condition I may well be satisfied, for I have a home in the heavens that passeth not away. If I look downward, I may well be satisfied, for what evils have I escaped! From what sorrows have I been delivered! If I look around, how few I see, whose present condition is more desirable. As an heir of God, let me not be vainly disturbed with earthly things. All is good, if I have God for my portion.

SECOND. Then I ought to have *a very low esteem of mere earthly goods.* How wrong it would be in me to speak of the self-denial of my condition; or of any sacrifices which I can have made; as if my relations to God were painful, or involved the endurance of sorrow for me. If I belong to God, I am enriched indeed. How can I be more so? He himself is my portion. All that he can do, then, belongs to

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me. I ought to be always happy, entirely happy. Yet how often do I hear of the pleasures of the world, as if the joys of man were there; and of the trials of a religious life, as if the service of God in the Gospel were a task and duty. How absurd and sinful is it for an heir of God to fly to gay and vain assemblies, to participate in mere worldly giddiness and vanity, to obtain personal gratifications, and secure delight. Cannot I be happy in God for my portion? Is not his service perfect freedom? Is there not everything in his favor and love, which the soul of man can ask? Why should I go down to Egypt for a satisfaction, which the land of promise alone can surely give.

THIRD. Then I ought to *cultivate a heavenly mind*, both in its objects and in its tempers. An heir should have an education suited to his inheritance,—a mind proportioned to his condition. I must be educated for my home. If God is my inheritance, I should think of him,

I should prize him, I should desire him, I should love to seek him, and to walk in fellowship with him. He is willing to educate me for my exalted prospect. He is willing to give me this heavenly temper, and to guide me in this profitable meditation and study. Let me constantly seek it. Let me gain a positive and manifest character in my religion, and my course of life. Thus shall I honor him by valuing him truly, by being happy in him, and showing that I can be happy in him. Surely Christ is a precious Saviour; and if I am an heir with him, I have a most precious inheritance. All my desires may be, and ought to be satisfied there.

FOURTH. Then I ought to *be finally ready for my inheritance.* The day will soon come, when the heirs of God will enter into their possession. As that blessed day approaches, I should be growing ready to meet it; and to meet it with pleasure and delight. I ought never to look at it with alarm or fear. It will

be a glorious day. How I ought to be growing in that character which is to live forever. Daily drawing more near to the image, as well as to the presence of God. I pray against sudden death; but it means unprepared death. No departure is sudden to the soul that is always ready. If I am ready to go home,—to be with Christ,—to enter into glory and joy eternal,—then the sooner it comes the better. I may be more useful to others, by still abiding in the flesh; but I never should think of it, as happier for myself. Let me live in faith, and in the enjoyment of this lively hope at all times. Then it is well. Happy here,—and happy in everything hereafter.

FIFTH. These are the *proper* characters of an heir of God. Contentment here. Elevation of mind above earthly vanities. An increasing heavenly mind. A constant readiness for the possession of his glorious inheritance. If I am an heir of God, let me press onward to obtain these characters. Let me display them

more and more. This is happiness enough. To live as a child and an heir of God. All this the Saviour gives. For all this, the Holy Spirit prepares me. In the attainment and possession of it all, I shall be completely happy and unspeakably blessed.

When shall the day, dear Lord, appear,
That I shall mount to dwell above;
And stand and bow among them there,
And view thy face, and sing thy love.

Meditation Ninth.

BRANCHES OF CHRIST.

Ye are the branches.—St. John, xv. 5.

This is one of my most blessed relations to God. The only-begotten Son has consented to become a Saviour for lost sinners. He has given himself in death for them. He has received the fulness of divine grace in their behalf. All that they can need or possess, is laid up in him. They receive from his fulness grace upon grace. They are united to him by the renewing power of his Holy Spirit. By faith in Christ, and love to Christ, through this Holy Spirit, they become one with him. They are thus grafted into him, as branches into the vine. They live by his power and through his grace. They derive all their life and strength from him. This, then, becomes

a very precious title, "I am the vine, and ye are the branches." Am I truly a branch of Christ?

FIRST. Then *all my spiritual life depends upon my Saviour*, and I must maintain my personal union with him. This is only to be maintained by living faith. A constant, watchful trust in him. I must seek him daily. I must think of him often. I must avoid whatever opposes him. I must go directly to him, and keep my constant fellowship with him. Nothing must be between the graft and the stock. My life is hid in Christ. My spiritual personal union to him is everything. No other power must come between us. No other agency is to be sought than his own Spirit to bring me and keep me there. I must not deny him, nor neglect him, nor wound him, nor undervalue him. Let me maintain an unceasing spiritual communion by faith and love, with him. Thus shall I bring forth fruit to his glory.

SECOND. Then *all my fruitfulness must come from him*, and I must constantly seek his power and strength. If I am separate from him, I can do nothing. If I abide in him, I may bear much fruit. The fruit which he asks from me is the fruit of his own Spirit. Love, patience, beneficence, faithfulness to him, faithfulness to others for his sake. These are the blessed fruits of his Spirit. Fruits which will adorn my profession, and honor his name. Let me be anxious upon this subject. I would glorify him. I would be among his recognized and chosen flock. I would bear his cross and follow him. Thus only can I make my calling and my election sure. Thus only can an abundant entrance be ministered unto me into his heavenly kingdom. Thus only can I glorify my Father who is in heaven.

THIRD. Then *my responsibility is great*, and I must labor to fulfil it. To be grafted into Christ is a great privilege. I have everything there. All laid up in him. I must have much

expected from me. I must render up a full account. To live an earthly and sinful life, or a self-indulgent and useless life, cannot be consistent with my relation to Christ my Saviour. The fruit which I must bear, must be like his. What he was, I must be in the world. And though I can never attain the same degree, I must walk in the same steps. I must mind the same thing. The mind which was in him must be in me also. How else can I fulfil my responsibility, or accomplish the purposes of my mission? Let me often think of how much I have received. What free forgiveness! What full redemption! What perfect acceptance! What forbearing aid! What tender guidance! What a glorious hope! For all these I must account to him. No creature can be more highly blessed. No one ought to be expected to be more faithful and useful in his daily practical life. O let not my blessings become my condemnation!

FOURTH. Then *my hope is most precious*, and

I must prize it. Where he is, there I shall be also. He has gone to prepare a place for me. He will come again, and receive me unto himself. In his presence is the fulness of joy. Endless pleasures are at his right hand. Let me daily consider it, and rejoice in the hope which he bestows. Let me value this precious hope, and strive to live according to its demands. This is a glorious hope. It can support, encourage, animate, refresh me in every trial. It can make me happy in every condition. No one can touch the Great Being to whom I belong. That heavenly vine can never be rooted up. If I am one with him, he will keep me in perfect security and in perfect peace. My season of trial will soon be passed. My provided glory will soon appear. O let me be watchful and faithful, that no man take my crown.

FIFTH. Thus *ought* a branch of this heavenly vine to live. Deriving life from union with Christ; obtaining fruitfulness by the power of

Christ; feeling responsibility for the mind and example of Christ; rejoicing in the hope of the glory of Christ. Upon this system, and these principles, let me live, striving constantly to honor the holy name by which I am called, and to adorn the blessed Gospel which I profess. Happy will it be for me, so to be found, and so to appear when my master shall come to call me before his throne.

When shall the day, dear Lord, appear,
That I shall mount on high,
And view thy matchless beauties there,
With never-ceasing joy.

Angels shall listen to my song,
And seraphs join the praise:
For none amongst the happy throng,
Shall louder triumphs raise.

Meditation Tenth.

THE TEMPLE OF GOD.

Ye are the temple of God.—1 Corinthians, iii. 16.

A TEMPLE is a building devoted to worship. There sacrifices and offerings are presented to God. Such was the ancient Temple at Jerusalem. There God was pleased to manifest his presence. Though he is everywhere present, he was pleased to promise his peculiar presence in the sanctuary which he had thus selected. But now God dwells not in temples made with hands. He selects for his abode the lowly and the contrite heart. The High and Lofty One who inhabiteth eternity delights to dwell with those who love him, and who reverence his word. As I am a Branch of Christ, I dwell by love and faith in God. As I am a

Temple of God, he dwells by his Holy Spirit in me. It is this indwelling Holy Spirit who teaches me, and leads me, who gives me a consciousness of my need, and shows me the glory and sufficiency of the Saviour who supplies it. This title is to me of the utmost importance and worth. If I am a Temple of God, and God dwelleth in me,

FIRST. Then I should *labor to keep this temple clean.* If any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy. But unholy imaginations, impure thoughts, selfish tempers, all defile the temple of God. Unprofitable books, injurious society, unsuitable dress, unbecoming recreations, all defile the temple of God. Nay, the introduction of lawful subjects at unlawful times, defile this temple. The Father's house must not be made a house of merchandize. He will not give his glory to another. He will not suffer the intrusion there, of what belongeth not in it. Alas! how often have I thus defiled his temple!

Will he thus destroy me? Not if I turn from my folly, and strive to honor and obey him hereafter. He is ready to forgive the sins which I penitently confess. But I must examine the state of this living temple. I must understand its real condition. I must strive constantly to make it a proper habitation for the Spirit of God. It must be my great object and effort to be holy in all my intercourse with him, and in all my aspects before him.

SECOND. Then I *ought to maintain his constant worship there.* My praises and prayers should ever be in my mind and heart. God should be worshipped within with a spiritual worship, in what I feel, and what I think, and what I desire. What acceptable incense is a truly grateful heart,—a praying and confiding spirit! More than all whole-burnt offerings and sacrifices. O let me remember his presence. Let me think of it. Let me desire it. Wherever I am, he is with me. In whatever I

am engaged, he is observing me. I must not forget him nor grieve him. I must lift up my heart to him, and give him my affectionate and earnest homage. I may thus always have a temple for worship. I may always retire within, and maintain there an inward communion with the High and Lofty One. How precious is the privilege! No man can deprive me of it. No man can shut me out of it. No circumstances of life can prevent my use of it. Then let me not voluntarily neglect it.

THIRD. Then *I ought to listen to his voice within me.* In his own temple, God utters his gracious voice. He speaks within me. There is a voice of his Spirit which utters itself to my conscience within. My safety and my happiness consist in my humble and faithful attention to it. I must listen and obey. He urges me to duty. He arrests me in sin. He would awaken conviction. He would elevate my thoughts and hopes to things above. He would sanctify me wholly. Let me ever hear what God is

ready to speak. He will never speak in vain. He will lead me into all truth. If I seek him and follow him, he will never suffer me to go astray. But I must be quick to hear, and instant in obedience. I must remember that he is always ready to be found by me. I must always earnestly seek him.

FOURTH. Then from this temple *there ought to go forth instructions for others.* If I am a living temple of God, how many dwell around this temple, who have no part in the blessings which are thus bestowed. The word of God must go out from his temple. The divine law must seek their dwellings from thence. I must therefore be an instrument for teaching others. Why do they dwell around me? Why have I been connected with them but for this? I ought to be constantly teaching and guiding some. There are always some that I may teach. Have I nothing to say or to do for the Lord who hath made me his temple? This guilty world must be blessed and

saved by Christians who dwell in it. God has placed his people here for that single end. Otherwise he would take them home to himself. If they do not bless the world, who will? Am I then one of his living temples? O let no ignorant and guilty mind come in vain to me, or be allowed to dwell without profit near me.

FIFTH. This is surely the *proper* employment of a temple. It must be kept holy. The worship of God must be there maintained. The word of God must be there heard. Instruction in the things of God must go out thence. O that it might be so with me! What a heavenly state is this! To have the Saviour constantly exalted within me, and his light and influence constantly proceeding from me! The Lord God and the Lamb are the light of the heavenly temple. O let them be the light of mine. Then shall I walk in the light, and my earthly state will be a constant readiness for my glorious heavenly state hereafter.

Thus shall I become prepared for the worship and the glory of his abode. Thus shall I attain the mind and habits which will fit me to unite in the praises of his redeemed.

O let me bear thy secret name,
The record of my name in heaven,
The pledge and earnest of those joys
That shall in fulness there be given;
Bestow the pearl which Adam lost—
The presence of the Holy Ghost.

Meditation Eleventh.

SERVANTS OF CHRIST.

The Servants of Christ.—Ephesians, vi. 6.

In my various relations, I would think especially of those which bind me to my Saviour, and the titles which distinguish them. What can be more important? What is more so, than the present one? A servant of Christ! I was a servant of sin. Alas! that I should be obliged to say so—A servant of Satan! The Lord Jesus redeemed me from this slavery, by becoming a servant of servants for me, and paying his own blood for my ransom. He brought me back from my bondage, by renewing me with his own Spirit. Then I gave myself up to him, to be his servant. And now, I have one master, even Christ. I have no other

one. No other will, or law, or plan, or counsel to follow. How simple is my path! How glorious is such a relation! The highest angel delights in it. They worship and obey him with joy. Let me obey him, and adorn my title with fidelity.

First. But *obedience becomes a servant.* If I am a servant of Christ, I must obey him. Whatever may be his commands, they are to be fulfilled. It is not for me to judge of them. The interests, and the responsibility are his. I am to do just as he says. When I hear and understand his word, that is enough. Obedience may be inconvenient, or unpleasant, or mysterious. A servant does not consider this. He follows the command. That is enough. The Lord who gives it, knows where it will lead, and what will be its result. How perfectly simple is a life of obedience to Christ! It involves no questions and no difficulties. It is disobedience and rebellion that suggest the questions and difficulties in our path. His

service is perfect freedom. No life is so happy. No life is so easy. Let this be my life! O that I may ever have the heart, simply to do what the Lord commands, and leave all the government on his shoulder, and all the obstacles for him to overcome.

SECOND. *Fidelity becomes a servant.* Entire fidelity. Not eye-service, doing reluctantly, and doing no more than I cannot avoid. But I am as cordially to obey in my master's absence, as in his presence. I am to consult in all things, my master's interest and will. Thus should I be faithful in all things to my glorious Lord. He sees me at all times. I am to have reference only to him. In every duty and engagement, I would carry out his holy will. He has left very distinct directions for me, to occupy till he come. This will be my effort. This shall be my plan in life. I have a most responsible trust. Much depends upon my faithfulness in it. Glorious results will follow upon my persevering fidelity. Fearful

punishment must await my negligence and wastefulness. O let me be watchful, and neither neglect my master's work, nor waste my master's goods. How happy will be the salutation, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant!"

THIRD. *Usefulness becomes a servant.* Affectionate usefulness in his master's service, whatever his work may be. His labor is always for some appointed end. His obedience and fidelity are to produce distinct and expected results. What, then, is my master doing in the world? What is the work he has given me to do? He must look for the results that come from my labor in his service. Ah, how much there is to do in the service of Christ! How much sorrow to be relieved! How much misery to be removed! Every act and work of kindness to man, is a part of this work of Christ. The souls and bodies of men are to be comforted and blessed. I may be, and I must be, always doing good. My rule in it is

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my master's command. My motive must be my master's will. I am not to look at the returns that I may get. I am not to consider what may be serviceable to me. I am to gather fruit for him. My recompense comes not from men. My record is with my Lord. Let me daily strive to carry home sheaves for his garner, and to increase the glory that he will receive.

FOURTH. *Responsibility becomes a servant.* He must have a constant sense of this. This is the end of his labor, that he must give an account for all. He must appear before his master, to render up an account of himself. I must stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. Soon will the day of my account arrive. I know not how soon. It is fixed, though concealed from men. I would be always ready. My account will extend to every part and portion of my work,—my secret and my public acts. It will be most searching and entire. My master will ask for everything that he has

given me. I must answer to him, who cannot be deceived, and will not be mocked. The judgment he will give will be unchangeable. The issues of that day will be eternal. Let me ever keep it in mind, and think each day as it passes, of the account I must give for that.

FIFTH. These are attributes of a servant. These all become *me* as a servant of Christ. Obedience, fidelity, usefulness, and responsibility. O that I may thus serve my Lord, in my body and my spirit which are his. Let me in every relation and call of life strive simply to know and to do his will. Let it be the great purpose of my life to be found acceptable in his sight,—to finish the work which he has given me to do,—that I may be, through his grace, a partaker of his reward, and of his glory.

Then will he own his servant's name,
Before his Father's face,—
And in the New Jerusalem,
Appoint my soul a place.

Meditation Twelfth.

DISCIPLES.

Ye shall be my Disciples.—St John, xv 8.

This is another blessed title which connects me with my Saviour. The reciprocal title to disciple, is teacher. As a disciple, the Lord Jesus is my Teacher. There is none who teacheth like him. The great agent of his teaching is the Holy Spirit. He has recorded his teachings in the word of God. He takes those blessed instructions, and writes them upon the hearts of his people. Thus all his people are taught of him. The most important knowledge for me is that which he imparts. There is no school of equal consequence or worth. I would open my mind and heart to receive his truth. I would hide his truth in

my heart, that the word of Christ may dwell in me richly with all wisdom. How happy is it for me, that my Saviour is willing to teach me! What forbearance and patience he has with one so stupid and dull! Yet he calls me his disciple. Am I indeed a disciple of Christ?

FIRST. A disciple *should have entire confidence in the knowledge and wisdom of his Teacher.* We can learn in no other way. I must thus entirely confide in my Saviour's wisdom. His instructions are certain truth upon all subjects on which he speaks. No subjects can be of equal consequence to me. He comes to reveal his Father's will. To open to me the way of safety, and to show me the path of duty and peace. He comes to teach me the entrance to eternal life. How infinite is his knowledge! All that is, or shall be, is perfectly known to him. He will teach me just what I need, and just as I am able to receive it. My mind and heart must be ready for his work,—yea, they shall be. I will come to him with entire con-

fidence, and without a doubt. I will receive his word as truth forever settled in heaven. I will seek to him for that instruction in it, which he is so willing to give, and which he only can impart. This is the place for a disciple. Lord speak, for thy servant heareth!

SECOND. A disciple *should highly value the instruction he receives.* When wisdom enters into the mind, it ought to be precious to the soul. Thus only can we learn. Wherefore is there a price in my hand to get wisdom, if I have no heart to it? I can never learn, if I am indifferent to what I am taught. But how inestimable are the instructions which Jesus gives! How important is their subject! How plain and simple his method of teaching! How adapted are these instructions to my wants! Nothing can be so important to me. They cover all the interests of the present and the future. All that I shall ever be, or want, he teaches me. All that I can desire, he will explain to me. All that I can wish to know

forever, he will teach me. What can be of equal importance to me? Better that I should be ignorant of everything beside, than of the Gospel which the Saviour teaches. If I have all knowledge, and understand all mysteries, and have no knowledge of Christ, it profiteth me nothing. I would say with St. Paul, I am determined not to know anything else in comparison with my crucified Lord.

THIRD. A disciple *should always have a ready and listening ear.* He must be ready to hear what his Teacher is willing to impart. Ah, how attentive should I be to the voice of my Gracious Teacher! He has much to say that I have never yet heard,—much that I shall rejoice to hear,—much that will be of inestimable worth to me. Let me eagerly catch the sound of his voice, and love the truth which he teaches. Let me delight to hear him in his word, and to listen to his voice as he speaks within my own heart. A teachable spirit much becomes me. I am of yesterday, and know

nothing. I would sit down at his feet, and intreat him to tell me still more of the wonders of his own love, and of the glories of his kingdom. I will thankfully receive that which it shall please him to teach me. I can have no previous opinion of what he ought to teach me. Let him speak what seemeth him best. I will open mine ears to greet his blessed communications. O may my heart burn within me, while I listen to the wonders of his love and goodness to me!

FOURTH. A disciple *should remember and improve the instruction which he receives.* I would lay up the word in my heart. I would meditate upon the truth I learn, and strive to understand the great and wonderful things I hear. As the word of Christ dwells within me, it becomes a light in my darkness, a comfort in my hour of sorrow, a guide to my steps in the path of duty. The journey I have to finish will require it all. Nothing will so well prepare me for this journey as a mind established in a

knowledge of the Saviour's truth. I may have many scenes in life, when memory will be my chief treasure, and my chief source of comfort. I may come to the place where present means of learning are all shut out from me. Then how blessed will be the word laid up in my heart! With what joy shall I draw out of the wells of salvation which the Lord hath before showed to me! Let me be a faithful disciple, and follow the Lord's gracious guidance and teaching while my opportunities are so precious and my privileges are so great!

FIFTH. I would bear with *me* all these marks of a faithful disciple. Confidence in my Teacher's wisdom. Love for the instructions he bestows. A listening and ready ear to gather the truth from his mouth. A teachable and humble spirit to follow it. And a faithful memory and conscience to retain his word. Thus only can I be faithful to the Lord's glory. The word must be mixed with faith in my heart, before it can bless me, or enable me to

honor the name of my divine Saviour. O let me thus be ever taught, and ever ready to hear and receive his heavenly teachings.

Shine on me, Lord, new life impart,
Fresh ardors kindle in my heart;
One ray of thy Allgiving light,
Dispels the sloth and clouds of night.

Meditation Thirteenth.

FRIENDS OF CHRIST.

Ye are my Friends.—St. John, xv. 14.

How full of condescension is such a title! Friends of Christ! The Gracious Saviour assumes my burden and my sorrows. He raises me up from the lowest degradation. He makes me his servant and his disciple. And then he says, I will not call you servants,—I will call you friends. The reason is as encouraging as the title is precious. The servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth. But all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you. There is not an angel in heaven but rejoices in the title of a friend of Christ. Well may I prize the mercy which allows me a name and a relation so full of affection and

honor. But what are the attributes of friends of Christ? And what ought to be mine as one of them?

First. *Sincere affection becomes a friend.* Friendship is founded there. It can only exist in this connection. A real preference, and a choice founded upon preference. If Christ is my friend, so will he stand before me. He will appear in all his relations to me, most valuable and desirable. I shall serve him and follow him, not from duty and obligation; not from a sense of interest; not for a future benefit to myself; but from sincere love for him. His commands will all appear attractive to me. His service will seem to be my highest privilege. To be allowed to serve him, is a blessing of unspeakable worth. I ought to forget all interest or hope or fear, and with a cordial, disinterested love for him, make it my delight to do his will. This makes his friendship a constant pleasure and delight. In this spirit let me constantly endeavor to cultivate the friendship of my Sa-

viour, and to walk familiarly and confidently with him.

SECOND. *Habitual remembrance becomes a friend.* Friendship is but little without this. A loved one dwells in the heart, in the memory, in the imagination, in the anticipations. In our earthly friendships we understand this. We practise upon this system constantly. Such thoughts and memories constitute a great part of the happiness of life. Thus ought Christ to dwell in my heart. My affections should recall him to mind and memory. He ought habitually, frequently, to arise before me. My reasons for thinking of him are many. My reasons for desiring and valuing him, are also many. Ah, He has done everything for me. He stands connected with every joy of my life. With every affection of my heart, my Saviour should be united. Gratitude, desire, reverence,—all combine to form my remembrance of him. How can I be his friend if I never think of him? How can I

be truly his friend if I do not cultivate thoughts of him, or if I am ashamed or unwilling to speak of him? I acknowledge that I am most faithless to him, and yet I can truly say, the desire of my heart is to the remembrance of him.

THIRD. *Constancy becomes a friend.* A friend loveth at all times. Neither negligence nor forgetfulness are allowed to interfere. There may be many trials of friendship. In earthly friendship there certainly are. Human infirmities frequently mix their bitterness in its cup. But in every condition, the heart must remain the same. Friendship for Christ may be proved in many conflicts. But I ought never to speak of what I must bear or suffer for Christ, as if I felt it a burden. I can never suffer anything for him, in comparison with his acts of mercy for me. Let me love him to the end, and count it a joy and privilege if I am permitted to suffer anything in his service and for his glory. He may exalt me to a

noble post of sacrifice. He may give me an opportunity to bear much for him. I can never lose by him. Where he leads I would follow. And without any regard to the future benefits I may receive from him, the past deserves all my love forever. O may he grant, that I may never forsake him!

FOURTH. *Fidelity becomes a friend.* Constancy regards succession of time. Fidelity regards interest and duty. Interest which may be entrusted, and duty which may be required. The Saviour's interest and honor should be very dear and ever dear to me. His name, and character, and work ought to be more sacred and precious to me than my own life. True friendship for Christ will guard the welfare of his great objects with unceasing watchfulness. His truth will be inestimably precious to his friends. His glory they will never give to another. O let me thus prove my friendship for Christ. I would live and die for Christ. If I am offered a sacrifice for

his faith, I pray that I may have grace to be faithful to the end. Thus would I prove for him, as he shall please to require it, the reality and permanency of my love. The recompense of the whole is his abiding and faithful love to me. He will own and confess me as his, in the great day of his power.

FIFTH. These are most *important* attributes. Am I really a friend of Christ? Then affection, remembrance, constancy and fidelity will all mark my character towards him. Thus I long to appear. Let me seek for the work of his own Spirit to make me conformed to his will, and devoted to his service and glory. Soon I shall prove the value of his friendship. Soon all other friendship will be of no avail. Then if he shall be a friend to me, and own me as one of his,—a friend in whom he delighteth, all will be well with me forever. For this, I may freely sacrifice all earthly things. I shall be an infinite gainer after all. The things which cannot be shaken will re-

main. I shall still possess a kingdom which cannot be removed.

Far rather would that earthly friends,
And every gift the Father sends,
Were taken from my heart, than find
Thee, O my Saviour, prove unkind.
The greatest sorrows man can bear,
I'll welcome with a heart sincere,
If thou wilt my companion be,
And make me closely walk with thee.

Meditation Fourteenth.

GOOD SOLDIERS OF CHRIST.

A good soldier of Jesus Christ.—2 Timothy, ii. 3.

This is quite additional to the preceding titles. A servant, a disciple, a friend, may be come a soldier. But it is a new relation. It requires peculiar qualities. It imposes pecu liar duties. To be a soldier, implies exposure, contest, difficulty. To be a good soldier, implies also courage, fidelity and success. Let me consider some of the attributes of a good soldier of Jesus Christ. He is one of the great army of the living God. He is engaged in a most important warfare. He has set up his standard toward Sion. He must press on through all opposers, to his glorious end. He will be made a conqueror through the Lord

Jesus Christ, who giveth him the victory. Am I such a soldier of Christ?

FIRST. A good soldier *has made a final choice of the service* in which he is engaged. He has enlisted for a warfare. It is his own choice. He is not ashamed of his uniform, of his duty, of his officers, or of his cause. He glories in the stand which he has taken. He participates in every triumph. He rejoices over all its success. Thus have I enlisted for Christ. He is the great Captain of my salvation. He has a warfare on the earth, which he is carrying on to final victory. I have united with him in it. I bear his name. I am enrolled among his followers. I would not be ashamed of his cause, or of my service and duty for him My enlistment is for actual duty. It is solemnly pledged in the appointed Sacraments of his Church. It is cheerfully made by the action of my own heart, under the guidance of his Spirit. It is recorded in his own book of remembrance. I am engaged to build up his

Kingdom, to gather his chosen, to bring in the vessels dedicated to his service, to maintain his authority, and to exalt the glory of his name. This is my final, faithful choice. Let me never shrink from it, or turn back in weariness from the duties which it imposes.

SECOND. A good soldier *must have true courage.* Ah, how important is this for me! I have many enemies to meet. My enemies are the enemies of Christ. I must continually contend if I would conquer at last. These enemies are temptations around, that would lead me away, or drive me back from my Saviour. Evil propensities and habits of thought within that would entangle and harass me. Evil men who surround me, and oppress me with their hostility to my Lord. The more faithful I am, the more my enemies will multiply, and the more earnestly they will oppose. If I am indolent and careless in my life, they will not trouble me. If they can make me a traitor, or induce me to desert my master's

cause, they will have accomplished their end. But if I strive to do my master's will, and to follow him truly and fully, then my enemies seem more hostile, and more bitter, and more multiplied. When I would do good, evil is present with me. But what then? Why, I ought to be the more bold and the more decided as a soldier. I must fight on. There is no other path. I see my Great Leader before me, and I must follow after him. Soon the contest will be over, and then the victory will be mine. I am resolved rather to displease and to forsake all others, than to forsake or deny my glorious Lord.

THIRD. A good soldier *must endure hardness.* It is a hard life. The soldier has much to bear—sometimes very much. He must endure suffering without murmuring. His power of endurance is often the very means of his victory. The warfare in which I am engaged, may require me to bear much. It may be long and very trying. But my mind must be

fixed and strengthened to bear even to the end. My great leader, the Captain of my salvation, goes before me. He has endured the cross and despised the shame. Let me follow him to the end. I would make no terms with him for my obedience. I would go with him through all. Patiently abide his will. Resist even unto blood, striving against sin. And allow nothing to separate me from the service or love of my Glorious Master and Lord. Other soldiers have freely laid down their lives upon the field. I desire to be willing to do so, if my Lord requires and appoints. Come what will come, by his strength, I am resolved to abide by him.

FOURTH. A good soldier *has a confident hope of triumph.* He never desponds. He fights not as uncertainly. He is saved and strengthened by hope. In all human contests, there is great uncertainty. But in our warfare there is none. Our Captain has already triumphed. We follow him to the fruits of his own vic-

tory. We are sure of success by his power. This hope is an anchor to the soul. The warfare may now be very dark and discouraging. Circumstances and probabilities may be all against me. But God giveth me the victory. The Crown is certain. The Kingdom is sure. And he appoints the darkest as well as the brightest periods of the battle. We cannot be overcome, if we stand our ground. O let me never flee, nor be discouraged. I would be found faithful, earnest, engaged, devoted. I have one voice to hear, and one master to follow. I may lose all beside. It is of little consequence. Whatever can live with Christ, I shall get again in that great day. O let me never lose my interest in Christ himself.

FIFTH. I am a soldier of *Christ*. And thus I have enlisted myself for life. And with courage, endurance, and hope, I will press forward. I may not have to fight long. But I will fight faithfully. Let me rest upon his power. Let me give myself up to his care.

Let me prize him even as chief among ten thousand. In his favor is life, and his loving kindness is better than life. He will be my strength and my salvation.

We're soldiers fighting for our God,
Let trembling cowards fly—
We'll stand unshaken, firm and fixed,
With Christ to live and die.
Let devils rage, and hell assail,
We'll fight our passage through;
Let foes unite, and friends desert,
We'll seize the crown in view.

Meditation Fifteenth.

A PECULIAR PEOPLE.

A peculiar people.—1 PETER, ii. 9.

I WOULD now select some titles which refer to our relations to others. And first of all, to the Church of God, the spiritual body of Christ. This is one of them; and it is exceedingly important and instructive. It reads in the margin, a purchased people, a purchased possession. Purchased for God. Purchased by Christ. Set apart from earth and sin, to be his servants. Ransomed from condemnation to, be his children. Separated from the world around. Dedicated to the service of God. They are in the midst of a sinful world, a peculiar people. They are so by God's own selection and appointment. By their own agreement and

devotion to his service. Am I one of them? It is a very great privilege, and it involves a very great responsibility. If I am one of this people,

First. Then *I am to be separated from the guilty world around me.* Separated not by mere outward ordinances, in which I unite, but which they reject; but separated in actual character and conduct, by the work of the Holy Spirit in my heart and life. I have come out from them, and my lot is no longer with them. I cannot walk in their paths. I cannot pursue their objects. I cannot partake of their pleasures. While they reject the gospel, my heart thankfully embraces it. While they live without Christ, it is my desire and delight to live for him and with him. While they are earthly in all their plans and objects, I am to seek the things which are above. There is my treasure, and there must be my heart also. Their opinions, and maxims, and plans, are of no consequence to me. I cannot

yield to their judgments, to their examples, nor to their authority. Not separate by any self-righteous assumptions, as if I were holier than they; but separate by the exercise and manifestation of a spiritual and heavenly mind. In everything striving to carry out my master's wish and purpose on the earth. Living for him actually, and for him alone. God has thus separated me, and I ought to be willing to be separate for him.

SECOND. Then *I should not find my pleasures in the wilderness abroad.* God has fenced me in for his own cultivation, a vineyard that he hath chosen for himself. I may find all my happiness and pleasure in his service. He surely is sufficient for me as a portion. True joy is a serious thing. I cannot run out for the trifling vanities of the world around me. I cannot form a part of its foolish passing pageant. My duties are in the world. But my joys are in the Gospel, in the service of my Saviour. I would put this great fact in habit-

ual practice. There is a happiness in communion with Christ, and in the fulfilment of his will, which the earth cannot afford. In his presence is the fulness of joy. Surely I may find it so. I can be happy in him. I dishonor him when I seek elsewhere for my pleasures. If I belong to him, he is enough. I wish to live upon this principle, and to carry it out constantly in my practice among men.

THIRD. Then *I have a special duty assigned me on the earth, and I ought to be engaged in it.* I am made peculiar for a distinct object. There is a peculiar work for me to do,—a mission for me to fulfil. The same work which engaged my Lord is to occupy me. I have my particular place and station in this work assigned me. The importance of this does not depend on outward circumstances. It is not by man's judgment that my duty is to be regulated. Everything is to be done unto the Lord. This makes everything religion. Thus am I to strive in every action to acknowledge and

honor him. Whether my appointed place be more or less elevated in man's estimation, it is equally important that I should glorify God in it. He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much. Whether I am in the kitchen, or in the field, or in the pulpit, or on a throne; I am there by divine appointment, and I am to do the will of God there from my heart. Let me learn what God requires of me, and faithfully follow out his commands.

FOURTH. Then *I ought to try to walk and live near to God my Saviour.* He has enclosed me for special objects and fruits. It must be my object to bring them forth abundantly. I am his disciple, if I bear much fruit. It must never be my object to be religious merely that I may be safe; but to be holy, that I may honor my Saviour in all things. That I may dwell in him, and he in me. O that I might bring forth fruit abundantly to his glory! I would endeavor in every good work to adorn his doctrine, and to honor him. How holy

can I be? How much of his image can I obtain? How much of his mind can I acquire? Let me never be satisfied with any other principle of action, or any other pursuit. It is not enough that my course is to do no harm. I would ask how it is to honor Christ? And how can I most honor him in relation to this, or to any other thing?

FIFTH. Surely *these* attributes ought to mark a peculiar people. They are separate from the world for God. They find all their pleasure in his service. They are active in fulfilling his will. They are pressing on to be like him, and to grow up into him in all things. Thus will I try to live. I am sure he will enable me to live so. He can do it. This will make a happy life for me here. Thus shall I become ready to be happy with him forever.

More of thy presence Lord impart;
More of thine image let me bear.
Erect thy throne within my heart,
And reign without a rival there.

Meditation Sixteenth.

MEMBERS ONE OF ANOTHER.

We are Members one of another.—Ephesians, iv. 25.

This title brings before me very important relations to my fellow Christians. We are all members of one body. We partake of the same spiritual life. We are united to the same divine Head. Our present state of trial,—our earthly condition is the same. Our cares, and duties, and sorrows, are exceedingly alike. Our personal experience and infirmities are the same. We are partakers of one Spirit and of one hope. We are engaged in one warfare under one leader, and are journeying to one glorious home. These constitute very important relations. None can be more so. They will last, some of them as long as

we live on the earth,—some of them forever. It is a great blessing indeed to have been brought into this spiritual body of Christ,—this blessed company of God's elect. If I am there,—

FIRST. Then *I ought to feel and cultivate a sympathy for all the members of the body of Christ.* If one member of the animal body suffer, all the others suffer with it. It is so also in the spiritual body of Christ. I would act ever upon the remembrance of this fact. I would remember that all true Christians are one. I would build up therefore no unnecessary lines of division among the Lord's people, but realize as much as possible my union with all. There are no Christians on earth with whom I have not more points of concord than of disagreement. Why should I not remember this, and regard them with affection and confidence? Let me cultivate this spirit of sympathy and tenderness towards all. I need it from others. I would feel it for them. Let me never, for

meat, destroy the work of God. In cultivating a spirit of sympathy and tenderness, I am promoting my own happiness, as well as the happiness of others. I am sure I shall remember such a course with more pleasure hereafter.

SECOND. Then *I ought to be willing to edify and help others according to my ability.* My outward earthly things I should be willing to impart. But not in these only should I be helpful. I must aid by my counsel, by my prayers, by my influence, in every effort which I can make. No man liveth to himself. There will constantly be some influence going out from me upon all. Let me see that it is a good one. Wherever I am, let my labor be to edify, not to destroy. I am but one,—but I am one. I can do but little,—but I can do something; and however small it may be, let it be right, and let me be faithful in it. O, it will be a blessed ministry to edify all my fellow Christians, with whom I am connected, to the extent of my means. How much benefit I may ac-

tually receive from the prayers of others! How constantly I ought to repay it. The privilege of intercessory prayer is very great. I am persuaded that I use it far too little. Ah! if others love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, ought I not to pray that grace may be with them? Ought I not to rejoice that Christ is among them?

THIRD. Then *I ought to love all the members of the Saviour's body.* There are particular bonds which connect me with individuals. God has made them so. I cannot but love them particularly. I am not required to do otherwise. But beyond these local and natural ties, I ought to love all the members of Christ, whenever I see them,—wherever I meet them,—whoever or whatever they may be. My heart should feel kindly to them, and wish well for them. They bear the image of their Master. They belong to the fold of Christ. They are led by the Spirit of Christ. I must love that image wherever it is. How happy and how useful to

me, is this spirit of love! All bitterness and bigotry is not more opposed to the spirit of the Gospel, than it is to my own happiness. I find ever that what is truly right is really happy. O let me act upon this blessed spirit, and cultivate it more and more.

FOURTH. Then *I ought to put no stumbling block in the way of any.* My example, and character, and influence, ought never to be an obstacle. How solemnly the Saviour warns me against offending one of his little ones! It were better a mill-stone were hanged about my neck, and I were cast into the sea. This is a fearful sentence. What can be more awful? O let me watch that I come not under it. How sad will it be to meet in judgment those whom my example has turned away from Christ, or caused to fall from him! Let me be daily careful. My conversation, my daily walk, my relations, my business, my recreations, are all watched,—are all influential,—may all be useful,—may all be injurious. What respon-

sibility rests upon me in this relation! My habitual character must come into my account. What influence have I had? Who has been saved,—or who has been injured, perhaps destroyed, through me?

FIFTH. How valuable are these reciprocal traits to the Church of Christ! Sympathy,—actual help,—love to all,—no obstacles to any. What a blessing would attend the whole church, were this the actual character of all its members. How happy will it be for me in every way to promote it. O let me watch for this spirit of union. Let me encourage it. Let me cultivate it constantly, earnestly. I am sure such a course must be acceptable to my Glorious Lord, who has bid all his disciples to love one another as he has loved them.

Our souls by love together knit,
Converted, mixed in one,—
One hope, one heart, one mind, one voice,
'Tis heaven on earth begun.

Meditation Seventeenth.

FELLOW-CITIZENS WITH THE SAINTS

Fellow-Citizens with the Saints.—Eph. ii. 19.

My present condition is a state of trial. All my fellow-Christians here are in a similar state. Mutual sympathy and relief are here constantly demanded. But I have a future as well as a present. I have also present relations to this glorious future. All the Church of God are not on earth. Part of the host have crossed the flood. They are at rest. They have received their glorious crown. But they are still parts of the same body. Their sympathies and their memories are doubtless still with us. I have a very intimate connection with them. It is a most exalting and blessed relation. The whole union of the saints of

God is as a glorious residence. A city of God. A building of God. Jerusalem, which is above the mother of us all. All the children of God, dwell together in this city of grace; but in different parts of it. The saints who have finished their course, have been permitted to enter into its glory. I am yet in a more distant part; but not less secure: not less protected and loved. A fellow-citizen with the saints! It is a glorious title. Am I one?

First. Then I ought *highly to estimate the privilege of a Christian life.* Whatever may be my present earthly state, how exalted are my connections! How important the honor which is thus bestowed upon me! God took me from a very low estate; and he has been pleased to exalt me with great mercy. I should never think of my religious state and opportunities, but with this feeling. Certainly a Christian is the highest style of man. How glorious is the privilege of having been called of God, to be one of his heavenly and redeemed family!

Could I see all those with whom I am connected, how exalted and honorable would appear the relations in which I stand! John was ready to worship one of the heavenly beings; so glorious did he seem! Yet he was only a fellow-servant with the Apostle. The poorest child of grace is not less truly connected in Christ with the highest angel in heaven. Let me never undervalue my privilege as a member of this glorious company. My conversion is my coronation. If God is mine, everything is mine.

SECOND. Then I ought *to be unceasingly grateful for this divine gift.* It is all a gift. A blessing from a pardoning God. It came not of myself, or of any works of righteousness which I had done. It is the gift of grace alone. Of all the blessings which I have received, surely the most inestimable is the gift of divine redemption. I have been purchased by the blood of Christ. I was a poor, lost creature, sold under sin, when he opened my prison-doors, and let

me go free. What a mercy was then exercised to me! When I look at the sorrow and darkness which I have escaped,—at the misery from which I have been delivered,—at the glories which are laid up for me,—at the love which has accomplished all, how thankful ought I to be! I have a home and an inheritance above. There the holiest of creatures wait to receive me, and to welcome me. There the Highest of all will rejoice over me forever. Angels may well desire to look into this and understand it. It is a mystery of grace. My heart ought always to bless God for the boundless consolation. If the world neglect me or revile me, it is of little consequence. God my Saviour loves me. Angels watch over me. Redeemed saints wait for me, and will give thanks for my entrance among them. O let me never neglect to praise God for a privilege so great.

THIRD. Then I should *walk worthy of my high vocation.* There ought to be a consistency, an accordance between my relations and my

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conduct. A child of a king must conform to the proprieties of his high standing. I am the child of the Eternal King. My brethren are all of a family of kings, a royal priesthood. I must strive to maintain a spiritual mind, and to lead a holy life. How pure and holy are my fellow-citizens, the saints of God! What ardent love have they for Christ! What grateful homage do they pay him! How perfectly obedient are they to his will! What unspeakable delight they have in fulfilling his commands! Thus should I endeavor to walk continually. How blameless ought I to be in the sight of God! Above the miserable haunts and ways of sensuality and giddiness and wasteful mirth. Away from the temptations and power of a mere earthly, selfish temper. Keeping under my body, and bringing it into subjection, that I may walk before God in newness of spirit. I know that it will require constant watchfulness and effort. But I know, also, that it will give me constant confidence and peace.

FOURTH. Then I ought to *press onward to the glory which is set before me.* How many have triumphed, who were once as weak as I! What glory have they now received! They are perfect, and perfectly happy forever. Well, the heavenly kingdom is equally open to me, equally secured to me, equally prepared for me. O let me press on to gain it. I have not long to strive, nor much to bear. Soon I shall see the multitude who have gone before. I would enter into their rest. Nothing must be allowed to turn me aside. Everything must yield to this, and work for this. I must leave the things which are behind, and reach after those which are before. I shall never gain them without constant and determined efforts. They are worth all my efforts. I have a glorious hope,—a glorious home,—a glorious household,—a glorious eternity before me. O let me not come short of them. Let me not fall through unbelief. Let me not be entangled in my course. Let me count everything else but loss, that I may win them.

FIFTH. These are most important *duties* for me, as one of the Saviour's flock. I would earnestly engage in them. As a fellow-citizen with the saints, I would value my high privilege. I would be ever grateful for the mercy thus bestowed. I would walk before the Lord unto all pleasing. I would keep constant hold of the hope which is set before me. Thus am I happy in my daily course. Thus do I fulfil the great purpose of my heavenly calling. Thus am I ready for the appearance of my Lord.

O glorious hour! O blest abode!
I shall be near and like my God;
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of my soul.

Meditation Eighteenth.

HEIRS TOGETHER OF THE GRACE OF LIFE.

Heirs together of the grace of Life.—1 PETER, III. 7.

THIS marks my relations to the Christian household, in connection with my future hope. But it is especially my relation to those on earth. Here we are heirs together of the grace of life. The grace of life is the gift of life eternal. It is the free gift of God in Christ to every believer. How great and wonderful is this gift! I do not now see its glory. I cannot now comprehend its extent. Its enjoyment is future, unrevealed in its particulars. But it is life,—life with Christ. I shall not die, but live. There is no more death. It is life forever. It is the gift of God. Perfectly secure, because God bestows it. Glorious and

sufficient also, because Christ has prepared it. Here I have a short probation with my fellow-heirs. But our life remains to be had hereafter. Of this I have no exclusive possession. I am an heir, together with others. It is one fact of our blessed communion. Thus Christians journey on together with a glorious hope.

FIRST. Then we are pilgrims and travellers together, and we ought *to live happily together on the road.* "See that ye fall not out by the way," said Joseph to his brethren. How painful to the soul are religious quarrels and controversies! How unhappy do they make the church! How injurious is their influence upon the world! How ruinous to the work of religion in the soul! The soul that harbors unkind tempers, unjust suspicions, harsh judgments, can never prosper. Better bear anything than resent, or retaliate. I have no time for fighting with my fellow-soldiers. Let me cultivate the spirit of peace and edification. I shall surely wish I had done so hereafter. I

would drive no wedge of separation between Christian brethren. I would strive to reconcile all, and to unite all to each other and to Christ. In this I shall much promote my own happiness, as well as the happiness of others It is worth all my labor. It is worth any labor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace with all the heirs of God, and partakers of his glorious gift.

SECOND. Then we are subjects of common trials, and we ought to *comfort each other under the burden.* The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all. We are children. We have many burdens to bear,—many sorrows to feel, many falls and losses to endure. What room there is here for mutual consolation! How blessed is the effect of such consolation! With words of mutual kindness we can bear anything. Ah, how much they ease affliction, and take away the bitterness of sorrow! Let us bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the

law of Christ. How much such a spirit of kindness helps in prayer! What peace it creates in the household! What happiness in social intercourse! I wish to follow out this spirit always. I long to be tender, patient and affectionate. I would not have a hard and unsympathizing heart for all the gains of earth. Words of peace! Sweet words! I would always speak them, and speak them from the sincere feeling of my heart.

THIRD. Then we have glorious prospects before us, and we ought to *encourage each other to press forward to attain them.* Our heavenly inheritance binds us all together, in the same lively hope. But we have many infirmities, and many contests on the road. And the strong must not rebuke or undervalue, but help and encourage the weak. How hard it seems to talk of our glorious hope! Why is it so? If I really valued it, and enjoyed it, would it be so? If my heart was in it, and I believed the hearts of others were in it, would

to be so? It surely should not be so. Why have I a tongue, and a mind, and a heart, if not for this? Why have I been placed in this mixture of trials and privileges—of hopes and sorrows, but that I might thus learn to be useful and helpful to all? My influence may be little; but it is not less for Christ, than for earthly things—whatever it is, it shall be his. If I have but one talent, I would use it faithfully for him, to spread his truth, to edify his flock.

FOURTH. Then I shall soon take possession of my inheritance, and I ought *not to be discouraged with trials by the way.* The road is not always smooth. I meet with many difficulties and obstacles. I bear many losses and pains. What of that? How transitory they are! They all pass rapidly away. And soon all will have passed, and I shall have finished them forever. There is no endless slough in my path. No sorrow endureth forever for me. Why, then, should I ever complain or

be discontented? Is it with my condition? But has not my Giver of life appointed it? How could it be made better, when his wisdom has arranged the whole? Is it with my own heart and life? Why do I not daily strive to amend these? This may be done. He has given me abundant means to do it. Let me never despond nor halt in my course. A cheerful, happy spirit becomes me ever. A spirit of contentment, and peacefulness, and hope. With this, I shall edify others. With this, I shall enjoy a life of blessedness myself.

FIFTH. How *manifest* are these attributes and duties of the heirs of life. Peace together. Reciprocal consolation. Mutual encouragement. Individual contentment. Let me strive for all these. Let me watchfully endeavor to exercise them. I would meet all my fellow-heirs happily before God. How soon that gracious gift of God may come! Can it be too soon? Happy will be the day, when the whole redeemed Church shall appear. When

the Saviour can say, "Of those whom thou hast given me, I have lost not one."

Onward, then, to glory move,
More than conquerors ye shall prove—
Still through danger, toil and woe,
Onward, Christians, onward go.

Meditation Nineteenth.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

Ye are the Light of the World.—St. Matthew, v. 14.

I would now pass to some of the titles which describe my relations to the world around me. If I am a Christian, I am a member of the Lord's chosen and spiritual flock. My citizenship is in heaven; but I am not in heaven. My record is on high, but my dwelling and my warfare are on the earth. I am not encompassed with angels, but with men. I am in the world,—a world of sin. I have very important relations to this world,—relations which I must faithfully sustain, and the duties of which I must fulfil. All of my duty is in the world. Much of my duty is to the world. Much of my usefulness and obli-

gation are there. My Lord requires me to be active and useful here for him. What he has imposed, I would earnestly endeavor to fulfil. In the title now before me, he describes one very important relation in which his wisdom and goodness have placed me. I am to be in my appointed measure and place,—a light to the word,—to guide them to the truth,—to lead them to a knowledge of Christ,—to persuade them to seek and obey God.

First. Then *my own mind ought to be clearly taught in the truth.* Thus only can I teach others. To be the instructor of my fellow-men in the great interest of eternal life, is an immense responsibility. The Saviour is himself the only real light of the world. I can give light to others, only as I get it from him. There I must find all that it is important for me to know and to teach. He gives me light in his word. There his own Spirit teaches me the things of God,—the glories of redemption. How inestimable are its contents! How ar-

dently ought I to study it! How earnestly to prize it! It is in reality of incalculable worth It ought ever so to appear to me. If there were but one copy,—lent to me only for a season,—how I should value it! But I am to receive it as God's express personal gift to me, and to esteem it a special divine communication to my own soul. What it tells to me I am sent to tell to others also. And it becomes of vast importance that I should gain clear views of truth,—a mind thoroughly settled in the faith, that I may speak to all clearly, definitely, and without fear or doubt, upon the great salvation there proclaimed.

SECOND. Then *my character must be holy*, under the guidance of the Spirit of God. Men are to be guided by my example, as well as taught by my instructions. What they see in me is as important and effective as what they hear. My light must shine in my habitual conduct in life. In the various personal relations in which I stand, my influence must be

seen and felt. This is a most important responsibility. Holy in all manner of conversation! O that such might be a description of my daily life! What prayerfulness, what self-control, what meekness, and watchfulness, and love become him who is set up a light to men! I cannot be hid. I do not wish to be hid. I must be seen and known. I only desire that Christ may be seen and known in me. Let my daily walk be a safe and faithful guide to those who are out of the way, that I may say to them "be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ." How many I may help, or how many I may oppose and injure, I cannot tell. I would have my light always shine.

THIRD. Then *my light ought to be steady and uniform.* Better is a small light that is steady, than a brilliant one that is fitful. A candle in the night is better than the lightning. My station may not be high, nor my field large; but my influence must be everywhere the same. I am what I am always,—at home and

abroad the same. There is no vacation in the duties and responsibilities of religion. The Christian is the same at all seasons, and in all places. This alone can manifest the reality of my spirit,—the integrity of my mind and heart. Let me be like the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The humblest servant of Jesus may do much good by his appointment and blessing. If I am uniformly on his side, the time will come that I shall derive the full benefit and influence of such a course. How important is a steadfast and abiding character to a servant of Christ.

FOURTH. Then *my light ought to be persevering, and hold out to the end.* Scenes, duties, relations, change; but the principles of religion are always the same, and always manifest their power in the same fruits. What piety is in youth and in maturity, it must be in old age. The same love to Christ, the same submission to his will, the same desire to serve

him, the same effort to be like him,—ought to mark me to the end of life. Ah, how beautiful is this permanancy of Christian character — this constant light of true religion! How effectual is it for our own comfort! How powerful in our usefulness to others. Let me strive earnestly to possess and to maintain it. My condition may much change,—my circumstances exceedingly alter, my relations to the world become very different. But my devotion to my Master's work may increase to the very end. Thus my example may be a blessing after I am gone, and my light continue to shine in the earth when I am no longer in it myself.

FIFTH. Thus must a light to the world be distinguished, to be of *any value*. Thus must I appear to be made useful. Marked by a clear knowledge of the truth,—by faithful holiness of character,—by uniform and steady example and influence,—by abiding and persevering devotion to God. I much desire to

have these my constant attributes, that I may truly shine to the glory of him who called me out of darkness to his marvellous light. The Holy Spirit can give me all these. I would seek them there.

Lord, if thou dost this wish infuse,
A vessel fitted for thy use,
Into thy hands receive;—
Work in me both to will and do,
To show men how believers true,
And real Christians live.

Meditation Twentieth.

THE SALT OF THE EARTH.

Ye are the Salt of the Earth.—St. Matthew, v. 13.

THE people of God are in the world, not only for its instruction, but for its preservation also. This is the great purpose of salt in the natural world. To withstand corruption in the earth. This is also the aspect of Christian usefulness, which it is employed to describe. The people of God are here to resist and counteract the power of human sin; to preserve men from ruin under the burden of their own iniquities. To rescue the wretched, and save the lost, and restore the decaying, is their great responsibility and office in the world. Thus they are divinely employed, and for this they are divinely blessed. They are thus the salt

of the earth. It is a most important title. I would faithfully realize its meaning and its purpose in myself, and in my own relations to the world around me. If I am to be the salt of the earth,

FIRST. Then *I ought to exercise a positive influence in the world.* This is the purpose and property of salt. It is intended in all things to exercise its own power to qualify and change; and such is the grace of God in the heart and life of man; and such must be the actions of the man thus changed, in his intercourse with others. My influence must all be active. To restrain evil; to overcome hostility: to increase happiness; to diminish sorrow among men; to the utmost extent of my power. My personal influence may be more or less in amount. This is not under my own control. God assigns me my place and my station. But whatever its amount, its character must always be the same. It must be manifest and active. I cannot yield to the sinful influence of others.

I am to counteract and overcome it. For this I am in the world. Not to seek my own pleasure, but to promote and testify the truth. For this I must exert myself continually. It will not do for me to go through the world in a mere negative character. I must ask, Whom have I blessed?—To whom have I been a savor of life? Salt that has lost its savor is profitable for nothing. A Christian without active religious usefulness, is no better. Let me solemnly look to this.

SECOND. Then *I ought to cultivate the active power of grace in my own heart.* Grace is to qualify my own character, before I can be the instrument of grace to others. The attributes of my nature are all to be subdued and sanctified by a divine power. My mind, my judgment, my heart, my will, must all receive and manifest the influence of this heavenly salt. It will sanctify my conversation. It will govern and direct my actions. It will adorn the whole current and course of my life. Thus it

will become active in blessing and saving others; but it will not without my constant cultivation of its growth and power within myself. It must, therefore, be a constant subject of effort and watchfulness with me. To be useful to others, I must be alive in myself If religion is really living in my heart, it will become natural and easy for me to do good. This ought to be my state. I will endeavor that it may be. I am not straitened in God. I will strive to improve the abundant privileges he bestows. I can do no good unless I have a clear consciousness of my own sincerity in the service of Christ, and of my real fellowship with him.

THIRD. Then *I ought to be constantly watchful over my daily walk among men.* Influence is always active. I cannot refuse to exercise it. It is not under my control in its existence and operation. In its character it may be. O that my influence might be always for good! Wherever I am, something may be done or

left undone, something may be said or withheld, which must exercise an influence, and may be made to produce a good influence upon others. How many secret thoughts come from what we see and hear, even when they are not addressed to us; nay, even when we hear by mere accident. I cannot tell what thoughts I may be the means of exciting; or what direction, even permanent direction, I may thus give to the character and mind of some other person. O let them not testify against me! Let me labor ever for good! I ought never to be unguarded. How much evil to myself, and to others, may come from one unguarded, or hasty act or moment. Let me ever walk circumspectly, and be salt indeed, in the associations in which the will of God has placed me.

FOURTH. Then *I must be careful not to lose the gifts of grace myself.* Salt that has lost its savor is good for nothing. It cannot be used like many other substances in its decomposi-

tion and decay. It is cast out; trodden under foot. O could there be another such illustration of an useless and unprofitable professing Christian? Of what worth can he be? Fit for nothing. If a minister of the Gospel become corrupt, he is odious. Desirable for no position. Trusted in none. If a Christian be light, or vain, or worldly, he is a great evil. Far greater than if he had never professed to be the servant of Christ. How great is the danger of this to me! How terrific will be the responsibility for it! Shall I ever become an apostate? Shall I ever be a mere monument of human deceitfulness and crime in the Church of Christ? O let me watch and pray, and strive against this tremendous evil! God only can keep me from it. But if I seek him and trust him, he will keep me.

FIFTH. *Such* are the properties of salt—as illustrating Christian character. Active influence upon others; dependent upon the living power within; to be maintained in un-

ceasing operation; worthless if this be lost. O let me be the salt of the earth, and learn and try to do the will of God from my heart. Let my influence, conversation, example, and habits of life all be made subservient to my Master's will, and promotive of my Master's glory.

O may I never silence break,
Unless I with thy guidance speak;
Then sanctify my every word,
That I may honor thee my Lord.

Meditation Twenty-First.

HOLY PRIESTHOOD.

An Holy Priesthood.—1 Peter, ii 5.

Under the Law, God selected a special tribe for the priesthood. They had peculiar privileges and peculiar duties. They were the instructors and guides of the people. They were intercessors for the residue of Israel. They ministered for them to God; and they ministered from God to them. The Christian ministry is never called by this name. They are no priesthood for the Church. We have but one Priest under the Gospel, our Great High Priest, and the Bishop of our souls. Ministers are now his messengers, the heralds of his sacrifice and salvation. But the people of Christ are called a priesthood in reference

to the residue of mankind. They are a holy priesthood, a royal priesthood. Am I one of this elevated and holy number? Let me consider the attributes of a priesthood as applied to them, and as applied to me.

FIRST. I ought *to have compassion on all who are in error, or out of the way.* This eminently becomes a priest of God. I cannot look upon ignorant and blinded men with anger, or censure, or aversion. I was once as blind as they. That I am not so now, is no merit of my own. If my mind has been enlightened, it is all of grace. God has had great compassion upon me. He will also have much compassion for others. His mind and feeling upon this subject, I am to obtain and exercise. How much error in the judgment may be consistent with a right state of the heart, I can never tell. God may accept many whom I condemn. I shall rejoice over all whom he receives. Let me regard all, therefore, with tenderness and pity. Let me try to recover and to bless them;

by no means to drive away or to destroy. This is the great example of my Great High Priest. I would follow it and exemplify it also in all my conduct with men.

SECOND. Then I ought *to welcome the penitent and returning.* This was a special duty and privilege of the priest. It is a special and blessed attribute of my Glorious Priest. He discourages none. He refuses none who sincerely seek him. Such ought to be my feelings and conduct in relation to those who are in the world around me. Wherever I see the feeblest desire to return to God, and to the path of duty, let me not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed. My heart should go out to such, with sincere desire and delight. The true Christian must always feel himself an appointed guide to the returning sinner. He is to comfort and encourage all who mourn. This is a beautiful and most important exercise of the priesthood. An unsympathizing Christian is a poor priest for sin-

ful men. O let me never be so! I would be affectionate, and tender, and forbearing, to the sorrowing and the sinful. I would labor constantly to gather them for the Lord. They may be jewels for him. They may be stars and seals for me. Let my whole life and character be attractive and encouraging to those who are without. Thus God will own my priesthood, and bless my ministrations for him.

THIRD. Then I ought *to rejoice over the ransomed and converted.* With what joy does the Saviour rejoice over the sinner returned to him! The lost sheep, the prodigal son, what beautiful illustrations are they of this! What beautiful illustrations of what I ought to be! My heart should partake of this joy. Conversion to God is what the sinful need; actual pardon and new creation in Christ. I must not cloak or conceal this great fact. I must not allow them to doubt my full conviction of its truth. For this great end must I labor.

For this must I pray, in behalf of all for whom my priesthood is appointed. Over this result attained, I must rejoice. In my own house,—among my friends,—in the world abroad,—how blessed is this result! God's priests can have no greater joy, than to see others returning from their evil way, and walking in the truth. If I am truly one of the holy priesthood, I shall surely rejoice with Christ in this glorious and happy result of his mercy and his efforts among men.

FOURTH. Then I ought *to pray for all.* It is a special duty of a priest to be an intercessor. Thus should every Christian pray for others. One of God's remembrancers. How extensive is the command to pray. For all men. For family and friends. For the world which lieth in wickedness. For a sinful race everywhere around me. Ah, how can I tell the power of intercessory prayer! God may give me great blessings in answer to my prayers for others. This has ever been the line of his dispensa-

tions. He thus replied to Abraham, to Jacob, to Moses, to Paul. And why not to me? Human merit is nothing. God hears and blesses for his own sake. Let me plead for those who will not pray for themselves. Blessings may come upon them, and the prayer will return to my own bosom. It is all important to maintain the habit of intercessory prayer. No greater act of kindness can I do in many cases, than this. It is kindness I may confer upon those whom I can reach in no other way. God is more ready to hear than I am to pray. He waiteth to be gracious. Let me not come short of my privilege, as one of the priests of God. Happy indeed is such an exercise as this!

FIFTH. Compassion for the erring. Kindness to the returning. Joy over the rescued. Prayer for all. These are the attributes of an *holy* priesthood. They are beautiful traits of the spirit of Christ. They are equally attractive and desirable evidences of the presence and power of the spirit of Christ in the

heart. For this he has chosen me, and set me apart from the world, to be one of his peculiar people, to bear his image, and to do his work. Let me be faithful in all things to him who hath called me to his service and glory. Blessings will come upon me from him and from many.

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Join to seek and save the lost,—
Raise us sinners to thy throne,
Add more jewels to thy crown,
Give the heavy-laden rest,
Christ make known in every breast.

Meditation Twenty-Second.

GOOD STEWARDS OF THE MANIFOLD GRACE OF GOD.

Good Stewards of the Manifold Grace of God.—
1 Peter, iv. 10.

THIS is another very important relation in which I stand to the world in which I live. Grace of God! What have I that I have not received from God? All my gifts are of the manifold grace of God. It is of his grace alone, that one so unworthy possesses anything. My powers of body and of mind,—my intellectual and spiritual gifts,—my means of influence and attraction in any way, are all gifts of God. Whatever I have, which can be made useful to other people, is a divine gift, not given to me, but lent for this purpose. All my personal and relative possessions are really loans,

—talents entrusted to me, for which I am to give an account to God. The only inalienable gift I have, is a divine Saviour. He never will be taken away from me. He is mine,—mine forever. Everything else is a loan for a special purpose and object. In the possession of it, I am but a steward for others. I must use all these gifts for their benefit. In this responsible character I stand in the world. What then?

FIRST. *I have a special dispensation in the world, and I must fulfil it.* I am not here for my own pleasure, but for the Lord's service, and for the benefit of mankind. My whole life is a mission appointed for some good end. Every part of my life is as truly so. Wherever I am, I am there to fulfil my Master's will. He fixes the bounds of my habitation,—appoints my line of duty,—designates my fields of operation, and bids me occupy for him till he come. O let me use the world, and my life in the world, as a steward of God. Whom

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can I benefit? Whom can I instruct? Whom can I help, or guide, or save? I ought constantly to be seeking my objects. Each day will bring out some new duty, and some new call. If the love of God is in my heart, and I have a spiritual mind, and a true knowledge of my Saviour, I may always be useful, and be useful everywhere. I would realize my divine appointment and my future responsibility.

SECOND. *My stewardship is especially of the grace of God.* The salvation of men is the great object and end of my appointed ministry. My outward means and my mental gifts are all intended to produce this great result. In all my relations, domestic and public, I would have this fact ever before me. What shall it profit any to gain the whole world, and to lose their own souls? To save the souls of men, is an end worth my labor, and it is the only one that is so. Whom, then, can I teach the great truths which God has taught me? To whom can I dispense the blessings which I

have thus received? Whom can I lead to a Saviour's feet, or tell of a Saviour's love? O let me live for God in every relation and duty of life! Eternity is the one great end and object of my life. I may not be appointed publicly to preach, but I am surely appointed in some way to make known the wonderful goodness and mercy of my God. I would stand before his throne with some precious souls, the attendants and seals of my ministry on the earth. I will not be satisfied with any attainments, unless I can acquire this glorious and happy result.

THIRD. In *this peculiar stewardship, I ought to be faithful.* Faithful to God, who hath called me and qualified me for his service. Faithful to men, with whom I have been placed in connection on the earth. Faithful to the great trust of truth and grace, which has been committed to my charge, and which I am to minister. Fidelity refers to every relation in which I stand, however temporary. I know not why

God may have been pleased to place me for a single hour in connection with others. Their happiness for eternity may rest upon this hour. As a steward of God, I have no hour to waste, I have nothing to throw away. I have nothing to assume for myself. I must be about my Master's business at all times. Lord, what wouldest thou have me to do? must be the question in my mind, in reference to every particular crisis or relation of my life. It is not easy to be faithful. There are many temptations to be unfaithful. There is much indolence and selfishness in my own spirit; much distraction in my condition; much sinful and low example around me. To be faithful, I must be earnest and determined. O let me awake to a full consideration of its importance, and waste no more of my Master's goods.

FOURTH. I *must realize my responsibility to God.* A steward must give an account. It must be a strict and an entire account. I know not how soon my own account may be re-

quired. Let me keep it ever before me. My house and my heart always in order. Each day's work should be finished with a reference to this final account. To-morrow I may stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. There I must meet the souls with whom I have been connected. There I must be reminded of the blessings I have enjoyed. There I must recall the opportunities I have had. There I must answer to the Being who searcheth my heart. O that I may be ready. Then my condition will not depend upon the amount which has been entrusted to me; but upon the fidelity of my management of it! He that is faithful in that which is least, is accepted as if faithful in much. How blessed will be an acceptance in that day! One smile from Jesus! What a recompense it will be! How fearful a rejection! Ah, to be sent from Christ. Who can bear it? Let me not hazard the possibility of it.

FIFTH. *These* are manifest properties of my

stewardship. My mission from God. To disseminate the knowledge and enjoyment of his grace. Fidelity in the fulfilment of every trust. A constant remembrance of my responsibility in it all, to God. O may I have grace to accomplish well the great duty and obligation of my life. Let me seek it daily. Let me look to God to give it. Let me earnestly improve it to his glory.

Should I to gain the world's applause,
Or to escape its idle frown,
Refuse to countenance thy cause,
And make thy people's lot my own;
What shame would fill me in that day
When thou thy glory wilt display.

Meditation Twenty-Third.

SHEEP AMONG WOLVES.

Sheep in the midst of Wolves.—St. Matthew. x. 16,

My relations to the world are not all active. I have much to bear, as well as much to do. The people of God are not of the world. That is the reason their Lord declares that the world hates them. He faithfully forewarns them of this universal abiding source of trial and sorrow. They must not choose his service from any selfish ends. The more faithful they are to him, the more they will be required to suffer for his sake. This has been the law of his providence in the whole history of his church. Why should I expect to be delivered from it? Sheep in the midst of wolves, did

not refer to his first disciples among the Jews and Pagans alone. It has been equally applicable in all other ages and relations. They that are after the flesh have always persecuted those that are after the Spirit. It is a title I must receive, and I must not be disappointed when I find it practically fulfilled. If I am one of the Saviour's flock,—

First. Then *I am to encounter hostility in the world, and I must expect it.* All that is in the world is in opposition to my Christian character and course. It will not help me. It cannot help me; but as God my Saviour overrules and controls it by his own power. The society of the worldly—their principles, amusements, plans of life,—are all hostile to the soul,—are all opposed to Christ. If any man will be the friend of the world, he must be the enemy of God. I am to choose Christ as my portion. I have chosen Christ as my portion, even with persecutions from men, and I am to be satisfied and happy with him alone. The

hostility of the world is to my fidelity to Christ. It is not to be provoked by me. I am not to reciprocate it. I am to bless them which curse me, and to pray for those who persecute me. But I am not to propitiate its hostility by any concessions of the great principles by which I am to be governed. If I must walk alone, be it so. Then I can walk alone with Christ. Better perish as one of his sheep, than partake of the power and nature of the wolves that destroy them. But this is to be my expectation in life, and its occurrence must not drive me away from him who has chosen me as one of his little flock.

SECOND. Then *my path is beset with dangers, and I must be constantly watchful.* The idea of danger could not be presented more distinctly than in this title. On the one side is perfect weakness,—on the other, resistless power directed by extreme hostility. The dangers to which I am exposed are sometimes

outward. Many of the servants of God have been required to give up their lives for Christ. What persecutions and sorrows have they endured! I may be called to bear a like testimony. The same bitterness of hostility to the truth which I profess still remains. If it is restrained in action, it is my Heavenly Master that has restrained it. It is always eager to be loosed. It may be loosed upon me. But if not, the dangers to my soul are ever pressing. The whole influence of the world is dangerous to me. Ah, it would persuade me to deny my Saviour,—to be a traitor to his cause,—to be silent when he is reproached,—to hide myself from opposition for his sake. How many have made shipwreck of the faith! How many have been hindered in their race! How many have come short of their rest! O may I never be deceived into a careless, unwatchful walk. Lord, help me to look on every side. If the wolves are now quiet or asleep, how soon may they wake for my destruction?

THIRD. Then *I have no strength of my own, and I must keep near my Saviour.* Nothing could express more entire feebleness,—nothing could better express my own condition. I could not meet one single trial with success in any strength of my own. I could not overcome a single temptation. There is an evil heart within me, which would yield and give way at once. Let me not be rash and foolhardy. I must be conscious of my weakness. I must not rush into temptation. I must not wander off in forbidden paths. If I keep near my Lord, I am safe. If I am a companion of his flock, and abide by his tents, and seek my pleasures in his favor and love, I may be defended and preserved. But I must not be deceived with the idea that the character of the world has changed; or that I have more skill in mingling with it than others; or that my character is not so susceptible to its evil. Ah, these very thoughts are only parts and expressions of my own real feebleness. None but one so silly could be so deceived. The

safety of my soul can never be so secured. No. I must always feel and act upon the title before me. Perfect weakness in the midst of great and constant dangers. Only safe as I walk circumspectly, and abide at my Saviour's feet.

FOURTH. But then *I have a divine Shepherd, and with him I am perfectly secure.* If I am in him in my new nature, and with him in my habitual course of life, I cannot be destroyed or overcome. Ah, it is a blessed testimony, "My sheep shall never perish, and no one shall pluck them out of my hand." How many myriads he has carried through extreme dangers and trials! What sufferings they endured! What deaths they passed! But they all triumphed. They have entered into their rest. They have kept the faith. Jesus has conquered in them. He can carry me through. I know not what he has prepared for me. I must glorify him in the fires. I must follow his ransomed flock. I must not deny him.

Every evil around me is limited. Every snare is weak if I resist. Every enemy is already conquered if I faithfully contend. The great work of my soul's salvation is perfected. My reconciliation to God, my justification before God, my fellowship with God, are all accomplished. I have nothing of them to do. But now I have to glorify and honor, in a hostile world, that Blessed Saviour who hath thus loved me, and redeemed me for his own. If I am faithful he will enable me to do it. I mean to be faithful even unto death. O may he keep me from the power of every enemy!

FIFTH. *These* are manifest conclusions from such a description of Christian character. I must meet constant hostility, I must encounter many dangers, I am utterly feeble in myself. But I have a Heavenly Shepherd, who will protect and defend me. O how blessed is such a condition! Its very weakness is a comfort, for it saves me from a thousand dangers, by keeping me watchfully away from them. Let

me live, ever live, as one of this happy, blessed flock.

Man may trouble and distress me,
'Twill but drive me to thy breast;
Life with trials hard may press me,
Heaven will bring me sweeter rest

O 'tis not in grief to harm me
While thy love is left to me,
O 'twere not in joy to charm me
Were that joy unmixed with thee.

Meditation Twenty-Fourth.

VESSELS OF MERCY.

Vessels of mercy.—Romans, viii, 23.

I would now pass to some of those divine titles, which describe the privileges of the Christian. There are many such in the word of God. The present is a very important one. It is a very necessary part of religious instruction to consider our privileges. They measure our responsibilities. They point out our influence. They describe our hopes. They encourage our efforts to obey. The great subject of divine revelation is in the shape of privileges to man. They appertain to the life that now is. They secure the life that is to come. All these privileges flow from the same source. The love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord,

which has chosen us, and enriched us, and exalted us; not for any works of righteousness which we have done, but from his own grace, according to his mercy. Vessels of mercy describe the chosen, exalted, and favored children of God. Vessels of mercy afore prepared for glory. Am I one of them? It is a blessed privilege, indeed.

FIRST. Then *I am endowed with the highest gift of God.* Mercy to the guilty. Mercy can be showed to no others. Not to all the guilty has mercy been extended. So far as I know, there are no beings in the universe who have been made the subjects of divine mercy but guilty men. For them pardon has been provided. But not all of them receive mercy. There are vessels of wrath. It is just there should be so. It would have been wholly deserved, had I been made so. My guilt provoked most justly the wrath of God against me. But God has made me a vessel of mercy, of his own good pleasure. A higher blessing

I could not have received. I owe it wholly to the goodness of the Lord. Why was I made a vessel of mercy? Certainly for nothing in me. The very thought of mercy is wholly opposed to such an idea. It necessarily implies guilt and unworthiness. This was wholly my character. Buried in sin I was when Christ found me and had mercy on me. I would never forget it. I owe all to grace. Why was I taken? I among my race, among my family, among my companions! Because God had mercy upon whom he would have mercy. But it is the highest privilege of my being. Every other advantage is temporary. This abides. His mercy he will not take from me. It endureth forever.

SECOND. Then *my gratitude ought to be earnest and continual.* How great a debtor am I. It should be the subject of my daily thankfulness. Nay, it ought to make me thankful in everything else. It gives a new character to every dispensation. If I am a vessel of mercy,

I can never be destitute. I may be poor, or sick, or sorrowing here,—I may be persecuted and cast out as evil. But this is only for a season. And even this shall be made to work for good. The mercy of God still follows me; and it will follow me to the end. This has been the great fact of my life. This is the great joy of my life. God has had mercy on me in my unbelief. He has endured with me, with much long suffering. I am pardoned, accepted, beloved, chosen, protected, all through grace. Then I ought to be the most grateful of beings. What would a lost spirit not give and do, to be a partaker of the mercy which crowns my unworthy life? I can never estimate the blessing till I see its full results hereafter. Then I shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord. For this I shall praise him forever. For this, let his praise ever be in my mouth.

THIRD. Then *my usefulness ought to be constant and manifest.* A vessel is not an accident, or

made without design or purpose. It is contrived for service. It is to contain for use. To be employed. Such must a vessel of mercy be. God hath made it contain mercy. For this he selected and designed me, to manifest his love. Every step in my life tells of his mercy, of mercy only. Mercy from God continually. I ought therefore ever to be showing it forth. It is made to impart mercy. Not to contain only, but to distribute. How patient, and tender, and gentle ought my whole life and character to be! How forbearing ought I to be with others, when I have received so much mercy from God. Thus I am to be useful, by being affectionate and tender. I am to have compassion on those who are out of the way. Thus I shall be useful by direct influence and agency. But I shall thus also be useful by example. Religious character in me will become attractive to others. It will be made the instrument of leading them to Christ, and of showing them how to walk in

him. O let me thus strive to honor him in a life of usefulness at all times.

FOURTH. Then *my prospect is most happy and secure*, and I must press onward to realize it. If when I was lost in sin, God made me a vessel of mercy, now that I am redeemed through grace, surely I shall never be a castaway. He can keep me, and he will keep me unto the end. His grace is sufficient for me. His loving kindness can never fail me. How happy and hopeful I ought to be, looking constantly forward to his glory, striving to enter into his rest! Has he chosen me for his service? He will prepare me for his heavenly kingdom. He will make me a vessel unto honor,—meet for the Master's use. But while I am secure in him, I must never be a vessel of presumption. I have nothing of my own. Nothing in which I may boast. I am still in myself naked, and poor, and in need of all things. All my hope and inheritance are in Christ my Lord. O let me never be puffed up,—never become self-

confident,—never imagine that I can stand alone. No; it is all mercy,—mercy to unrighteousness,—mercy to guilt,—to the very end. The top-stone will be as truly grace, as the foundation. God must have all the trust, and all the glory.

FIFTH. Thus as a vessel of mercy ought I to feel, and live, and act. With a deep sense of my exalted privileges. Gratitude for the gracious gift. Usefulness in its employment. Hopefulness in the prospect which it secures. These are blessed manifestations of the power and goodness of my God. O let me strive for them, exemplify them, manifest them.

A debtor to mercy alone,
Of covenant mercy I sing;
Nor fear with thy righteousness on,
My person and offerings to bring

The terrors of law and of God,
With me can have nothing to do,
My Saviour's obedience and blood,
Hide all my transgressions from view.

Meditation Twenty-Fifth.

PARTAKERS OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

Ye are Partakers of Christ's Sufferings.—1 Peter, iv. 13.

This also is an amazing privilege. The sufferings of Christ were in his voluntary offering of himself for human sin. He assumed the guilt and the penalty of his people. He passed a life of earthly sorrows. He endured a series of spiritual conflicts. He was subject to a penal and dreadful death, in the fulfilment of his work. All that they would have been compelled to bear, as the punishment of their own guilt, he endured in their stead, as the ransom for them. He became their surety, their substitute, their representative. Accordingly, they were considered as doing for themselves all that he did for them. If one died in

the stead of all, then all died in him. It was the same as if they had. Thus they stand before God. They are partakers of Christ's sufferings,—in all the merit and worth of them,—in all the results of glory from them,—in all the line of imitation and example too, which they set before them. In all these senses it is true,—"if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him." Am I a partaker of Christ's sufferings? If I truly believe in him, have chosen him, and do follow him, I surely am. What then?

FIRST. Then *Christ ought to be extremely precious to me.* All the blessings I enjoy proceed from him. His sufferings have secured my very right to live. Every comfort of my present life arises out of them. I see his sun, and breathe his air, and feed upon the bread which he gives me, because he has first given himself for me. Every hope I have comes from them. All my ability to obey and serve him spring from his own redeeming love. I

have nothing of my own. O, when I think from what these sufferings have redeemed me, —to what they have brought me,—what they have laid open before me,—by what sorrows to him it has all been done,—surely I cannot over-estimate their worth to me. I have no friend like him. He ought to be very dear to me; most precious in my sight. I can never love him as I ought to do. O let me try to love him daily more!

SECOND. Then *I ought to carry out the purposes of these sufferings in myself.* He has bought me with a price, that I should be holy and without blame before him in love. He would have my whole heart and character, productive of fruits to his glory. My following of him must be real, uniform, entire, persevering; my whole character must show forth his praise. For this I must constantly labor, that in my whole life I may be holy,—that Christ may not have died for me in vain. How exceeding sinful sin becomes when it is com-

mitted against such love as this! I crucify him thus afresh, and put him to an open shame. O let me strive to be like him in all things, everywhere to show the power of his love, and the honor of his truth; to follow him with fidelity even unto death. If I am myself to be conformed to the image of his sufferings, be it so,—He can bear me through. Better die with him than deny him. Better be crucified with him, than crucify him again. Better all things as his elect, than join in any sin with those who oppose and neglect him.

THIRD. Then *I ought to carry out the purposes of his sufferings in the salvation of others.* He has purchased for himself a flock, a church, from the midst of this evil world. They are brought to him by being made to know his love. They are made to love him by seeing how he hath first loved them. All his converted people are to become messengers of his love to others. In my measure and degree, and in my appointed place, I must proclaim it.

For this end I should always labor, according to the grace of God which worketh with me. Whom then can I save? To whom can I tell the love of Christ? How can I spread abroad his truth? I would bring others to partake of what I enjoy. O that all the world might know him! They would if all his people were zealous and combined in spreading the knowledge of him. How earnestly ought I to labor to teach the unsearchable riches of Christ! For this would I spend and be spent, that I may by all means save some. Let me feel it to be the great business of my life to publish the glad tidings of his sufferings for sinners, and to invite men to become partakers of these sufferings.

FOURTH. Then *all my hope must rest upon this glorious work of a Saviour suffering for me.* I must hope. This is the characteristic and privilege of a Christian. I am begotten again for this purpose,—to the enjoyment of a lively hope. But hope cannot rest upon any imper-

fect or unfinished foundation,—not upon any works or progress of my own,—not upon any facts which are merely contingent and possible. My whole foundation is in the perfect and finished work of Christ. My all is there,—there alone. As I look forward, he is my righteousness and strength. As I look back, he is my atonement and reconciliation. In eternity he is to have all the glory. There I must rest alone. I cannot join any of my own works with him. I cannot join any other being with him. I cannot have mediators many. To which of the saints can I turn? They are all as dependent upon him as I am. To call upon them for mercy is fearful idolatry. Christ is alone, and there is none other. I may be a partaker with him in all that he has. All things are mine, if I am his. No one else can give me anything; nor do I need anything from any other. I am full and complete in Christ.

FIFTH. Thus every partaker of Christ's

sufferings should feel and act. Finding him unspeakably precious, maintaining the purpose of his death, extending his dominion, hoping in him only. How happy is this spirit! How blessed is this relation! How improving is this use of it! O thus let me be, and feel, and live in Christ.

Henceforth may no profane delight
  Divide this consecrated soul;
Possess it thou, who hast the right,
  As Lord and Master of the whole.

Nothing on earth I so desire
  As thy pure love within my breast;
This, only this, will I require,
  And freely give up all the rest.

Meditation Twenty-Sixth.

CHILDREN OF LIGHT.

Children of the light.—Eph. v. 8.

Light and darkness refer to our condition; the external circumstances in which we are placed. We may have our senses and powers of perception in all respects perfect; but darkness shuts out their exercise and use. When the light comes, it makes our state plain, and our way clear. Now we can move and act with safety and without fear. The Scripture calls spiritual ignorance, darkness; and religious knowledge, light. The one forbids the soul to act; the other enables it to act securely and well. Ye were sometime darkness; now are ye light in the Lord. The revelation of the Gospel has made all things plain for me. It is

the true light, in which is no darkness at all. I now know my origin and my end; I know my need and my remedy; I know my dangers and my security. Without this Gospel, spiritual ignorance covered every object which it was most important I should see. But with it, every path is clear. What a difference! What a change! How precious and important is its continuance! They who possess this Gospel are the children of the light. I am one. God has made me so.

FIRST. *Now I see my way clearly.* This is an inestimable blessing. An unspeakable privilege. The darkness has passed. The true light now shineth. I see my guilt; it is great and dreadful. But I see also a complete forgiveness in a Saviour's blood; it is all-sufficient. I see my dangers,—they are many and pressing; but I see also a divine protection. God is reconciled, and on my side. This is enough. I see my weakness. It is destruction to me; but I see an infinite provision of divine

strength. What need I more? I see death at hand; it is alarming to the flesh. But I see also a glorious and secure eternity beyond. Why should I fear? Thus everything is plain. I need make no mistake. My errors must all be voluntary. Nothing can be needed to make the path in which I am to go more intelligible. If I walk as a child of the light, I am safe. If I walk uprightly I walk securely. This is an inestimable privilege. Every possible blessing may flow out from it. Let me esteem and enjoy it, according to its worth.

SECOND. Now *I may walk securely.* My path is perfectly plain; through the world—not of the world. I have a journey to complete through a hostile country. I am forewarned of its dangers, and snares, and trials. It may be arduous. It may be difficult. It cannot be long. It need not be uncertain. If I walk with God, I shall surely walk safely and happily. I can walk with him, because he has promised to accompany me, and to show me

the way I am to take. He lays out my path. He leads me in it. He supports me through it. He accepts me at its close. Let me press earnestly forward. My pilgrim days will soon be finished. I need have no doubt concerning their termination. I have no question to ask in reference to the future, which the Gospel has not answered. I will have no doubt. Let me daily try to walk in the light,—in a clear, undoubted path. I wish to make no compromises with sin,—no reconciliation with the world,—no concessions of any kind to the enemy. It is far easier to walk in straight, than in crooked paths,—far easier to walk consistently than inconsistently. Let me so walk,—with my mind settled,—my discernment clear,—my heart unchanging and fixed. Thus shall I walk securely as well as happily.

THIRD. Now *I can work successfully.* I know what God would have me to do. The work of God is to believe on him whom he hath sent. Salvation,—this is God's work. This

is my work. Salvation for myself. Salvation for others. Salvation for all. I have every means to work to advantage. Clear knowledge,—abundant opportunities,—secured strength,—promised success,—means all provided. How blessed it is to work for God in a clear and open day! The heathen has no such day. Ah, what darkness covers his path! What cruelty attends his whole system! What anguish does he bear! The Papist has no such day. What vain and foolish superstitions fill his mind! What fearful idolatry marks his scheme of error! What useless forms and penances enslave his soul! How empty are all these works of human merit! But around me the true light shines. How clear and distinct are works of affectionate gratitude and love to Christ; who hath redeemed me from all bondage, that I might serve him in newness and freeness of the Spirit.

FOURTH. But then, *I am also seen clearly.* The very light which enables me to see, makes

me also seen. I cannot be concealed. I must not desire to be. How many eyes watch me! Eyes of which perhaps I am entirely unconscious. I am never alone,—never less so, than when I seem to be so. I can never sin in secret. I ought not to desire to sin anywhere. My life must be a constant testimony. Ah, how much good a faithful example often does! How much evil, an injurious one! But life is always an example of some kind. I am ever a spectacle. God looks to me. The Saviour looks to me. Angels look to me. The Church sees me. The world sees me. Devils see me. Ah, never alone,—never unwatched! Always in the light. To be judged by the light, and according to the light. I must not desire to be hid. I must not need to be concealed. I must do nothing that requires concealment.

FIFTH. Thus when the light shineth, they who are in it see clearly, walk securely, work successfully, and are seen completely. Let me carry out this remembrance. Let it be the

rule, the warning, and the guide of my life. Thus as a child of light, I may finish my journey in peace, while my day lasts; and enter upon a far brighter day hereafter.

No darkness there shall cloud my sight;
These now dejected, feeble eyes
Shall gaze with infinite delight,
On the full glories of the skies.

Then I shall see thy lovely face:
And changed to purity divine,
Partake the splendors of the place,
And in thy glorious likeness shine.

Meditation Twenty-Seventh.

PARTAKERS OF HIS PROMISE.

Partakers of his Promise.—EPHESIANS, iii, 6.

THE divine promise has always been the chief inheritance of the people of God. Their earthly state is always inferior, limited, and unsatisfying. Their hearts are constantly desiring something beyond the earth. Accordingly, they have always had the divine promise as their comfort and their chief possession. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, were heirs together of the same promises. All the earlier saints were thus looking forward, not having received the promises in their fulfilment. God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. The great promise to them was a Saviour. It still is so.

A Saviour to us; that is salvation,—a personal Saviour. The possessions of man are his attainments, and his expectations. A Christian's attainments are very little,—his expectations constitute his main and most important wealth. These are divine promises. They are all partakers of the same great and precious promises. For the accomplishment of these, they wait, and look, and labor. Am I a partaker of these blessed promises?

First. *I owe it all to grace.* The promise is a divine gift,—a most precious and important gift. It was given to me when I was lost in sin. My expectations and views were all earthly. I had no knowledge of heaven, and no desire for heavenly things. But what a change it wrought in my condition! What a prospect it opened upon my soul! How fully it meets all my wants and desires! How elevated it has made my condition! I am no longer merely of the earth, earthy. I have an inheritance and hopes above. Surely I can

never be grateful enough, or love enough, in return. I can never be too humbled under a sense of my need and unworthiness. Having received such a Saviour, and such a promised salvation, I ought to live in a spirit of constant gratitude and devotion, deeply feeling my sinfulness,—giving constant praise and glory to God.

SECOND. My *condition is a sure one, and I ought to be happy.* With such a promise ever before me, cheerfulness especially becomes me. The whole influence of the Gospel is designed to produce this. He hath thus redeemed me, that I might serve him without fear before him, in all my life. I would let the world see, that my joy is real and is sufficient. I have no need to go to the giddiness of earth to be happy. God who hath given me his promise, cannot be defeated in his plans. How perfectly happy then is the influence of his Gospel! Everything done,—settled forever, by an Almighty Saviour and Friend, in the very way

most of all desirable to me! There is no room for carefulness or despondency. Thanksgiving becomes me always. What is there to compare with such a state? I have not a trial, but I have a corresponding promise. Every page of the Bible contains some promise of good for me; and earth has no sorrow that heaven in this way cannot cure.

THIRD. My *state is a most exalted one, and I ought to be holy.* Nothing else can be consistent with it. All my prospects, companions, relations, require me to be holy. All unite to urge me to walk with God in newness of life, —to become conformed to the image of God in all things. That is holiness, to be like God. That is his plan, that I should be an imitator of God as one of his dear children. Every earthly influence opposes it. But the divine promise sustains and encourages me.. This holds out a constant prospect of victory and success. Am I at sea? I am sure of a haven of rest. Am I on a journey? I am certain of

my glorious and peaceful home. O let me not be cast down or entangled in the world. Let me not be drawn aside by its rebellions. The promises lead me to be watchful, to pray, to live near to God, to be active in his service, and earnest to do his will. No temptation or difficulty comes to me for which there is not a blessed promise provided.

FOURTH. I have *a blessed inheritance, and my affections ought to be fixed upon it.* I have a kingdom which cannot be removed. An unchangeable God has promised it to me. O let me think of it,—meditate upon it,—consider it a reality,—strive to live in the influence of it. Surely I may live in the world with heavenly affections. I may have my real treasure and possessions above. I would have it so. I would walk and live under the influence of a truly spiritual mind. Let me dread a mere formal religion, a mere self-righteous confidence. I would love to have a mind to think of God, and that loves to think of him, and

desires to be like him in all things. I am sure this is far the happiest life. No life can be happier than that which is thus governed by heavenly affections. The promises cover all this. God will give me the mind I seek. He desires to impart it. He will lead my hopes and my desires more and more above. And I shall thus be walking according to my high vocation, and preparing for the enjoyment of his glory.

FIFTH. These are traits which become the partakers of divine promises,—Humble gratitude, religious cheerfulness, consistent holiness, and heavenly affections. Let me constantly seek these happy features in myself. Let me earnestly labor to acquire them, and carry them out continually. Thus shall the promises be more and more my comfort and my stay. I shall rejoice in hope. I shall be saved by hope. I shall grow in holiness and in grace, as I gain a brighter and a clearer hope.

I would not live for worldly joy,
Or to increase my earthly good;
My passing days and hours employ
To spread a sounding name abroad.

For thee my Saviour would I live,
For thee, who for my ransom died;
Nor could untainted Eden give,
Such bliss as blossoms at thy side.

Meditation Twenty-Eighth.

MY MOTHER AND BRETHREN.

My Mother and Brethren.—St. Matthew, xii, 49.

How can I have a higher privilege than this? When I consider my own need, and the fulness and worth of a Saviour for me, my relations to him become the most important of my being. When I consider the dignity of his nature, his exalted power and excellence, in connection with my own unworthiness and guilt,—the extent of his condescension and love to me seems amazing. When I realize the sufferings he has borne, and the death he has been willing to endure for me, and the glory which he has thus obtained and prepared for me,—me so wretched and so vile,—his compassion and tenderness are beyond my

conception. And yet he brings his disciples, sinful as they are, into the most tender and permanent relations to himself. He calls them his mother and his brethren. How he here cuts off the vain idea of exalting his actual mother to a place of worship! Had it been designed that she should be venerated as an object of prayer, would he thus have placed her upon the common level of all his disciples? I must love her. I must love all his disciples. But I can worship none. All his chosen, redeemed, sanctified flock, are as mothers and brethren to him: the dearest objects of his affection,—the nearest relations in his heavenly household. He alone is the one to whom prayer is to be made. Am I in this glorious blessed relation to my Saviour?

First. Then *he is an object of the most tender affection to me.* No relation can express affection more tenderly,—not the affection of passion or desire, but the affection of pure and respectful love. Why he has brought me into

this relation to himself I cannot now tell. His own choice has done it, for reasons wholly his own. How he has done it I am told,—by taking my condemnation on himself, and procuring my pardon,—by removing my hostility by his own Spirit, and leading me into cordial union with him. He thus adopted me as a child of God, and made me one with himself, and then gave me the spirit of adoption, and taught me to improve and enjoy the privilege thus bestowed. Our relation is now one of the tenderest affection. I know that he loves me. I could not say with truth that I do not love him. But I long to love him more. He ought to be personally very dear to me. I should ever esteem him a living friend,—one who is ever with me,—whose feelings towards me are most tender and kind. Such will I ever try to be to him,—not believing or obeying merely in regard to his word or command, but loving him as the dearest object of my heart, feeling willing to give up everything or all things for His sake.

SECOND. Then *my conduct towards him ought to be perfectly frank and candid.* I love to read that expression, "his apostles returned and told him all that they had done." Why should I not always do so? He knows it all before I tell him. I can give him no information. But he loves to have me thus deal with him. It is happy for my own heart, to be free in all my dealings with him. I know that I do many things which I may well be ashamed to tell him. But the very habit of telling him will restrain me. Why should I ever offend him? Why should I ever wander from him? I cannot be too minute in laying myself open before him. I would pour out my heart before him. He understands all my infirmities. He knows whereof I am made. He accepts me according to that which I have, and not according to that which I have not. He will correct me, but not in his anger. Let me learn to consult him, to talk with him face to face, as a friend. Thus acknowledging my offences, and yielding myself to him freely, I shall act con-

sistently with this intimate and blessed relation.

THIRD. Then *I should have entire confidence in his feelings and plans towards me.* A mother and brethren! I know what feelings of tenderness I have towards my mother and brethren. Why has he not the same towards me? I ought never to doubt it. His love to me has been too thoroughly proved and manifested, to allow any doubts. He can do me no wrong and no harm. I know he has infinite power. He will exercise it according to his own wisdom; but it must be for my welfare, my happiness. It cannot be otherwise. In this I will confide. Is there any presumption in trusting in him? How can there be? Ought I not to put my whole trust in him? Ought I not to exercise entire faith? And what is that but perfect confidence? Confidence in his outward care; confidence in his full salvation; confidence in all his promises; confidence in his unceasing protection and defence. Unlim-

ited power, unbounded wisdom, unchanging love! In these I may confide perfectly. And all this my Saviour has for me. As one of his family, I may repose my perfect confidence there.

FOURTH. I *ought to be very jealous of his honor.* How earnest should I be in maintaining his authority, the influence of his Gospel. I could not hear reproaches upon my mother. How can I be one of the Saviour's family, and be heedless when he is despised, or his name reproached. How can I be ashamed to confess him; to acknowledge my relation to him? How can I refuse to maintain his cause and his honor among men? Surely I cannot associate with those who despise him, or deny his dignity or his rights. He depends upon those thus connected with him, to maintain his authority. Ah, let me never be wanting to him. Many of my brethren in Christ have not counted their lives dear unto them, in maintaining his word. I will never deny him though

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Popery, or Infidelity, or worldliness, assail and persecute him. I will stand by his sacred cause. If he will strengthen me, I am ready to give up all for him.

FIFTH. Such intimate affection, frankness in habitual intercourse, confidence in his love, and jealousy for his honor, become the mother and brethren of Christ. By this title, and by these attributes, would I love to be distinguished. Whoever else I love, let me love Christ still more! Then will he own me as his in everlasting joy!

There God's adopted sons
  Cease from their earthly strife;
Rejoicing, rest on dazzling thrones,
  And wear the crown of life.

There shines the little flock,
  Rich in the Saviour's blood,
Who early sought this living rock,
  And fixed their choice on God.

Meditation Twenty-Ninth.

GOD'S HUSBANDRY.

Ye are God's Husbandry,—1 Corinthians, iii. 9.

God's spiritual flock are his husbandry, his vineyard, his garden. Every soul in this happy number is also the garden of the Lord. He hath chosen it for his own cultivation. He hath separated it from the wilderness around. He hath fenced it and protected it by his providence and ordinances. He is occupied in cultivating it by his own Spirit, and planting it with wholly right seed. He watches over it with the utmost care. His dispensations of mercy abound upon it. He takes the highest delight in the results of his work, and rejoices in the fruits which it brings forth to his glory. How great is this privilege! To be thus se-

lected, favored, and blessed, as the garden of the Lord! How happy is it for me, to have been thus adopted as the portion of the Lord's inheritance! He has then redeemed me from the wilderness, and renewed me and refreshed me with the early and latter rain of his Spirit. And whatever ministry or agency he may employ, he still keeps all the right and property in himself. God's husbandry! Am I so? Then,

FIRST. What *comfort* such a privilege imparts. I might have been in the wilderness still, trodden down by all the wild beasts of sin and worldly lusts. But of his own grace he hath selected me for himself, that I may be to the praise of his glory forever. The cultivating and guarding of his garden is all his own. The soul of man was a paradise in the beginning. Every trait of beauty and fruitfulness was there. God means to make it a paradise again, with every holy trait once more restored. O what comfort do his purposes give

to me! He means to make me holy forever, —perfectly conformed to his holy and perfect will. When I am despondent and cast down, —when I find so much within me opposed to his will,—when I see how rapidly all evil grows,—I should despair, were I my own husbandry. Never could I recover a wilderness like this. But when God undertakes it,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost combine to choose, restore, and cultivate it, for his eternal glory,—the purpose of God greatly comforts me. I am God's husbandry, and he will thoroughly restore me, and make me to bring forth fruit to his glory.

SECOND. But then what *warning* it gives me! God will suffer no unclean thing in his garden. He will cultivate it, but in his own way. His methods will often be rough and painful to me. He sees much fallow ground that he must break up with mighty power. The overgrowth of thorns and briers must be burned up. Dark providences make deep furrows in my soul.

Wintry seasons seem to freeze up all my hope forever. I am sometimes almost ready to despair. But he knows his own plan, and he directs every step of it in his own way. I vainly imagine that all his tillage with me can be with sunshine. I dwell in no tropical religion here. O no! I know that I must often be severely dealt with, if he will do me good in my latter end. Then let me never repine. Let me have entire confidence in his wisdom and his love. He is leading me on to a glorious destiny. If I am watchful, he will not forsake me. But ah, I am surrounded by a wilderness! Against its influence I must watch continually. I am in the world. O let me not be of it, or with it, in its habits or its fruits!

THIRD. But it furnishes me also equal *encouragement.* God does not leave unfinished works. Did he give his Son for me? Has he sent his Spirit to me? Did he awaken, recall, and pardon me? Has he carried me so far, in this spiritual cultivation, only to give me up in the

end? Ah, I know he has given up many cultivated spots,—he has plucked down the hedges and laid them waste. But why? Because, when he looked for grapes, they brought forth wild grapes—no fruits for his honor. "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" he may say. If I am careless and fruitless, he certainly will say so. Let me not be high-minded, but fear. His past cultivation is no inducement to carelessness;—but it is great encouragement to effort, great excitement to fruitfulness. If I bear fruit, he will purify me, that I may bring forth more fruit. I would be watchful to bear always the marks of his husbandry. In every condition, to carry with me the image and the holiness of the Lord who hath chosen me. All that he has done, will then be a constant argument for what he means to do. And I may rejoice in the hope which his gracious cultivation imparts.

FOURTH. For what blessed *hope* does this title give me? I shall not always be in a

wilderness. The world now harasses and distresses me; but it will not be so forever. God has higher purposes for me. He has a holier and happier condition to bestow upon me. Every season brings nearer the happy result. He comes now into his garden to examine and cultivate it. He will soon come down into his garden to gather its fruits, that he may rejoice in them forever. O how great is the privilege, to be forever the garden of the Lord!—to have him delight in me, and dwell with me, and refresh me with his presence, and render me more and more holy and happy in his likeness, and to shine forth forever under his blessing for his own glory. And this is the hope he sets before me. Let me live under its influence, and according to its demands. I would make it the business of my life to bear fruits for him,—fruits of benevolence, and holiness, and love, and praise. Then how full of hope is my prospect. Soon an everlasting spring will open before me; and Jesus my glorious Lord will rejoice in the work of his own hands forever.

FIFTH. Thus blessed is my state as God's husbandry. The title is full of comfort, of warning, of encouragement, and of hope to me. While God is carrying on his work, far from opposing it, or rendering it difficult, I will be a worker together with him, in everything. I will strive myself carefully to keep the vine that he hath planted, and the branch which he hath made strong for himself.

O could rebellious spirits taste
Those glorious seasons they have lost,
Or live again their misspent days,
How would they spend them all in praise.

Thus may I pass this life of mine,
While days of grace unclouded shine,
Thus my accepted time improve,
Lord, to the glory of thy love.

Meditation Thirtieth.

GOD'S BUILDING.

Ye are God's Building.—1 Corinthians, iii. 9.

THUS the Lord calls his whole living church: "Whose house are we, if we hold fast our rejoicing and confidence unto the end." Thus he calls each individual Christian: "Ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." The whole is made up of individuals; and he dwells in the whole, because he dwells in each. No blessing can be greater! No exaltation higher. What is all the glory of the universe, but God's building? He buildeth his chambers in the waters,—he clotheth himself with light as with a garment. But all these glories are temporal. They shall fade and pass away. The building of a redeemed soul is

everlasting,—it can never be overthrown. If I am God's building, how glorious will be the issue, when he brings forth the top-stone of his work, with shoutings of grace unto it! Happy is it for me, that he who hath laid the foundation, his hand also shall bring forth the top-stone and finish the glorious work. If I am God's building,

FIRST. Then *God has laid the foundation*, and I must abide on that. It is a glorious foundation. No man can lay any other. It is Christ,—an Almighty and covenant Saviour. There all redemption and all hope for man is established. Jesus Christ in his perfect Deity and mighty power; I can do nothing without that. If that is removed, the whole edifice falls. It can stand on nothing else. Jesus Christ in his perfect obedience for man; nothing else can meet the claims of man's condemnation and provide acceptance. Jesus Christ in his atoning death; man's curse and penalty can be removed in no other way. Jesus Christ in his

ascension and triumph; all hope of glory rests upon that. If he is not risen, faith is vain. Jesus Christ in his intercession and everlasting power; all means of the Christian's perseverance and conquest arise from that. This is the foundation,—the only foundation. There I must abide. I must not mingle anything with it. I must not undervalue it, or doubt it. I must not be induced to forsake it. All other foundations are false foundations, and will come to nothing. This glorious foundation abides forever. There in simple faith and confidence will I abide.

SECOND. Then *God is himself the Architect*, and I must fulfil my appointed work according to his will. He has his own way of carrying on his building. He furnishes me abundant means and materials to build in it according to his way. If I build my own works of wood, hay and stubble, the fire which tries every man's work will destroy it. If I build with Christ's work of gold, silver, and precious

stones, it will stand every fire wholly uninjured. To build with my own works, to rest upon my own attainments, and follow out my own plans, is not only wasted labor, but is ruinous also. To rest upon Christ's sufficiency, and to be growing up in him, and according to his image, is a true and precious growth in grace. Faith in Jesus,—love to Christ,—simple following of him with joyful confidence and hope,—living by faith in prayer, through his Holy Spirit,—and looking for the hope of eternal life;—This is God's way of building. The mind of man often rejects it. The sinful world always despises it. The sensual heart doubts its sufficiency. But thus the Great Architect has laid out his plans for me. Thus I mean to follow them out. I am satisfied that he understands the subject, and his way must be the best.

THIRD. Then *I must abide God's time in building*, and not be discouraged. When God built the soul of man at first, it was a time of

rest. Neither adversary nor evil was occurrent. It was the work of glorious, silent, unseen power. But that glorious building was destroyed by sin, and now to restore it is a work of toil and time. Ah, how much labor has often to be spent in preparing, arranging, and adapting materials before the building makes any show. To the impatient mind and untaught eye, it seems all confusion. But the Architect understands his own plan, and makes no haste. I may often be discouraged by God's ways of building. He begins sometimes so far off; cuts his timber away up in the forests of his providence; quarries his stone away down in the depths of human guilt; makes such circuitous journeys to gather all his appointments together; so long prolongs the period of completion; the building seems almost ready to fall into ruins before it is finished. Ah, he knows the way that he takes. Let me work patiently with him! Faithfully follow out each particular direction. Never stop to be informed of the connection of each parti-

cular part with the whole. Let me proceed with zeal and persevering earnestness under his guidance. The work of his own Spirit he will surely, happily, and perfectly complete. I will wait and patiently obey his commands.

FOURTH. Then *he has a glorious design*, and I shall be satisfied with it. He will try his work on the way. Persecutions will arise; seasons of trial will come; sorrows and distresses will gather around me; his own law and judgment will test my work. It may be a dark and stormy day; whatever is perishable will perish. It is well it should perish. I may fear that I shall perish with it. But no; I am God's building. He is able to protect his own, and he will protect it. His work within me will stand the trial. He will carry me through every proving which he has prepared. And then, when he has finished, how glorious is my end,—a temple of God forever,—formed for his worship,—erected by his power,—prepared for his presence,—filled with his

glory,—everlasting in his kingdom,—the Lamb my light,—my God my glory. What happy remembrances! What heavenly possessions! What anticipations surpassing all! Well may I look forward with hope, and say I shall be satisfied with it. Satisfied! I shall rejoice forever in that which God has thus created, and give him everlasting glory.

FIFTH. Thus, with a Glorious Foundation, a Heavenly Architect, an appointed time of building, and a most exalted design, God's temple in the soul goes on. O let me not thwart his designs, but be a worker together with him in the whole of his glorious plans.

The Saviour, whom I then shall see
With new admiring eyes,
Already hath prepared for me
A mansion in the skies.

May I by faith survey with joy
This change before it come,
And say, let death this house destroy;
I have a heavenly home.

Meditation Thirty-First.

BLAMELESS AND HARMLESS.

Blameless and harmless.—PHILIPPIANS, ii. 15.

THE consideration of privileges leads me forward to speak of influence. I would select a few of those Scriptural titles which describe the Christian's influence in the world. How true it is, that no man liveth for himself. Probably no single act of life is wholly separated from some influence upon others. Every act will produce its specific influence upon ourselves; and thus will tend at least, to create an influence from us upon other men. Influence seems almost as involuntary as evaporation. I cannot prevent it. I cannot even regulate or direct it wholly in its operation. What can I do? Why I can keep the source

clean and wholesome, that the influence may be of a kindred character. Thus must I do. I cannot say I will have no influence. I cannot be evil, and say my influence shall be good. But I can be myself good, and thus feel sure that the operation of my character shall be good also. One branch of Christian influence is described in the present title,—negative influence. It is a very important branch. Am I one of these sons of God,—without rebuke, blameless and harmless?

First. Then I *must not be conformed to any known evil.* There is much around me in the world that I know to be wrong. The neglect of God, the disregard of his Sabbath, the forgetfulness of his Word, the contempt of his ordinances, the constant violation of his commands,—I know to be wrong. I must not conform to them. I must not participate in them. They will certainly exist without me. Multitudes will rush forward in the way which they open. Perhaps I cannot help that; but I can

certainly be clear from it. Circumstances cannot alter the wrong of these things. I may be in society where they are countenanced. I may be travelling where different views and habits prevail. God's commands cannot depend upon men. I must not yield. It is impossible to be blameless and harmless, and to partake of known sin. No one must be able to set my life against my principles. I may be reproached. I cannot help it. I must not do wrong to avoid it. This stand is fixed. I cannot do anywhere what I know and feel to be wrong.

SECOND. Then *I cannot encourage that which I do not know to be good.* It is not enough that it is not immediately and positively evil; or that some other persons consider it harmless; or that some apparently good people indulge in it. When I consider my influence,—that which may be lawful, may not be expedient. Where will it tend? What is its direction? When its full growth, its final result is reached,

what will it be? If this will be evil, and my example or influence encourages or leads to it, how can I be blameless and harmless? I see many earthly indulgences around me to be judged by this standard. I see many habits of life to be thus considered. The best that I can say of their present aspect is, they are very doubtful. There is no doubt of the innocence or propriety of giving them up. Some hesitating person may be actually waiting to see what I shall do. Encouraged in evil,—or held back by my example alone. Ah, better is any loss, than to be the pattern to a lost soul. I must know a thing is right, before I can safely touch it. I must plant nothing that I shall desire to pull up hereafter. I must yield to nothing for mere convenience or indolence, the real character of which I have reason to suspect.

THIRD. But then *I must indulge no habit of secret sin.* It is impossible to make sin a secret. It is like a fire in the body. It will and

must display its influence, either by positive acts of its own, or by deadening and destroying the actings of grace. I can never afford to play with a sinful thought; or to read an injurious and unsettling book; or to abide in unprofitable society. My conscience must be clear. My personal habits must be pure and holy. My most secret moments must be in the fear and remembrance of God. Ah, how often does the whole character become lifeless, injurious, worldly, perhaps worse, from the mere yielding to secret sin. Prayer neglected,—the Scriptures forsaken,—evil tempers indulged,—unholy meditations permitted,—unkind relations allowed,—temptations considered, and not instantly refused. It is as when one letteth out water. If I would be blameless in influence, I must be right within. I will labor for this. O that I may cultivate that secret character and dominion of real goodness, that there shall be no habitual evil in me, from which influence may proceed.

FOURTH. Then *I must maintain an active habit of religion.* My mind cannot be merely negative. It must be filled with something. Let me fill it with that which is right. My understanding improved,—my thoughts rightly directed,—my habits guarded,—my time occupied,—my efforts active in usefulness to others. If I am doing no good, I shall surely be doing evil. My influence must be something, upon somebody. Can I not be happy in usefulness? Whose sorrows can I alleviate? Whose comforts can I promote? It may be troublesome sometimes. But it will do good,—it will do me good. It will be very difficult to be blameless without being useful. To say I will do no harm, is necessarily ineffectual. Idleness, indolence, listlessness, selfishness, indifference to others, is always harm. I may not be actually without blame! If I do right, I shall not be without blame from the wicked. But I may be unjustly blamed, and be blameless in fact. That is of no consequence. I care little for man's unrighteous judgment. Let me give no

cause of blame. But ah! what a watchful, useful life, that will require! To do it I must live near to God,—a son of God. He can keep me from all evil.

FIFTH. Can I be blameless in any other way? I will not conform to known evil. I will not encourage that which I do not know to be good. I will indulge no habit of secret sin. I will maintain an active and useful life in the service of God. Thus shall I adorn the doctrine of my Saviour in all things; and the world shall be ashamed hereafter, having no evil thing to say of me.

Let all my converse be sincere,
My conscience as the noonday clear,
Think how the All-seeing God my ways
And all my secret thoughts surveys.

May I alone in God delight,
Have all day long my God in sight,—
Perform my Maker's holy will,
Oh, may I never more do ill.

Meditation Thirty-Second.

PEACEMAKERS.

Blessed are the Peacemakers.—St. Matthew, v. 9.

THE Gospel dwells and operates in a hostile world. A world full of warfare of its own. All these wars and fightings come from the sinful lusts and passions of men. They are the evidences and the results of the fallen nature of man. But the Gospel makes also a warfare of its own. In resisting the wickedness of men, it provokes that wickedness to resist. It thus often sends a sword before it sends peace among men. If the Christian will be faithful, he must endure hostility. He must bear persecution. In such a world, my dispensation is placed. In all its hostilities, my own character is to be proved and tried. I

cannot go out of the world. I am to receive and to fulfil the dispensation which is committed to me here. But what is to be my influence here? This I am to decide. The present title indicates it. I am to be a peacemaker. The disciples of Christ are peacemakers.

FIRST. Then *I must make no quarrels.* This is a most important step. If all men would take it, wars and fightings would cease. But this is the Christian's stand. I must contend for the faith. I must be set for the defence of the Gospel. I must endure in this, whatever the Lord shall appoint. But I must make no quarrels among persons. If so, I must give no voluntary offence, that my ministry may not be blamed. But what a host of evils would this cut off! What control of my tongue will it require! What government of my temper and mind! What careful, forbearing, and benevolent walking among men! In my family,—in my neighborhood,—in my relations to society,—in the church,—no division or

warfare must be traced to me. To do good to all,—evil to none,—must be the rule and purpose of my life. A whisperer separateth chief friends. I may hear much that I must not tell. I may know much that I must conceal. I must not allow even tempers or jealousies towards any to dwell within me. Then I shall be sure not to excite the spirit of discord around me. Ah, how many painful quarrels have I seen arising from silly repetitions of an useless story,—from some vain and empty desire to communicate some piece of news. Swift to hear that which is good, I ought to be. But slow to speak that which is evil.

SECOND. Then *I must not continue or perpetuate quarrels made by others.* I may have had no part in the original warfare; and yet I may continue it by my own resentment. It requires two to make a quarrel. If I am passive to insult,—deaf to reproach,—slow to wrath,—refusing to resent or vindicate myself,—the fire must soon go out. I see many Christians who

will not begin, but they will not end a quarrel. How can they be peacemakers? It is impossible but that offences will come. Woe only to the man by whom they come: not to the man who patiently and quietly bears them. But can I receive to confidence one who has injured me? I am not bound to receive or to justify a character which I disapprove. I must not give countenance to that which I know to be wrong. But my reason must be there,—not in my own endurance of personal wrong. This I cannot, must not, resist. I shall withdraw myself from every brother that walketh disorderly. But neither in word or deed must I prolong the strife. I must bless when they curse,—I must pray when they persecute. Thus, where is no fuel, the fire goeth out. Blessed will be the recollection, that when I was reviled, I reviled not again.

THIRD. But *I must actively endeavor to heal all quarrels within my reach.* In my private relations, I would thus be an active peacemaker.

Trying to unite, and never to separate others. I shall have frequent opportunities to do this. If the love of Christ dwells in my heart, I shall wish to do it, whenever I have opportunity. What a blessing to society is one peace-loving and peace-making spirit! What a blessing is it in a household! How great a blessing to the one who retains it! In the religious relations of men, I must seek for peace. I will have no part in religious controversy. I will strive to be at unity with all the real people of God. I will give all my influence to encourage and promote that unity among others. There is no question among real Christians that is worth a single hour's bitterness. I may do something towards allaying the bitterness which I see. At any rate, I will do nothing to promote it. Thus, by my example, my influence, my exhortations, and my efforts, I shall help to make the Lord's people one, — and shall have the comfort of having been a peacemaker in the body of Christ.

FOURTH. Then *I must labor for the dominion of the Gospel among men.* This is the great peacemaker. When the hearts of men are truly converted, they will seek the things which make for peace. I cannot promote peace on earth more surely, than by promoting the influence and dominion of the Gospel. What can I do to promote this? Can I teach any one? Can I circulate God's holy Bible among them? Can I faithfully attend and maintain a ministry of the pure Gospel? Can I help to send the Gospel abroad to others? I may do all these. But surely I can always maintain the truth of the Gospel. I can stand upon its side. I can exemplify its commands. I can pray for its prosperity. I can ask for divine blessings upon its ministry. I know not what I can do. The actual influence of all that I do, it is impossible for me to know. God may do much more with me, and by me, than I imagine. At any rate, I will do all I can. All that I can do shall be to promote and establish my Saviour's Gospel. Thus shall

I be really a peacemaker among men, far more extensively than any personal labors of mine can reach them. Thus shall I carry out the influence which this title describes.

FIFTH. If I am one of the Lord's peacemakers, I shall thus be distinguished and occupied: Originating no quarrels;—prolonging none;—striving actively to heal all;—laboring to extend the Gospel, which is to give peace to all. It is a most happy and useful mission. I can in no way more truly honor God. In no way more really gain abiding blessings to myself. O let me constantly thus live and act. This was the example of my Gracious Master.

O how benevolent and kind,
How mild, how ready to forgive!
Be this the temper of my mind,
And these the rules by which I live.

Dispensing good where'er he came,
The labors of his life were love.
Then, if I bear a Saviour's name,
By his example let me move.

Meditation Thirty-Third.

WITNESSES.

Ye are Witnesses.—St. Luke, xxiv. 48.

The Saviour had accomplished great works on earth. His chosen disciples were actual witnesses of these works. They had seen his miracles and his mercies,—his death and his resurrection. They were sent forth to tell of them,— to make known in all lands and in all tongues the wonderful works of God. But their living testimony soon passed by. Yet the Saviour's witnesses remained. Other generations came forward to repeat and to perpetuate the testimony. His church were to be always his witnesses among men, testifying to his authority, and power, and grace, and atonement, and perfect righteousness for men. As

his witnesses they remain, testifying unceasingly the greatness of his love. Multitudes believe their testimony, experience the power of the truth, and become in their turn the Saviour's witnesses among men. It is a most important influence. Witnesses of what? The power and love and preciousness of Christ. To whom? To all to whom the Lord shall send us, at home and abroad; everywhere testifying for him. Am I one of his witnesses?

First. Then *much depends upon my knowledge.* I cannot testify that which I do not know. I must know the power of Christ as a Saviour. How else can I testify? Has he forgiven me? Have I embraced his promises in faith? Have I truly come into his family to be one of his little flock? Have I a real knowledge of his grace, and of his renewing power? Ah, how important becomes such knowledge, if I would testify for him! I must seek a deeper experience in my own heart of his reconciling love,—of his all-suffi-

ciency to save. Thus shall I speak with confidence, and my tongue will be loosed. I must live in his constant light and favor, that he may accompany my testimony. There is great ignorance of him in the world, and great indifference to him. Multitudes blindly reject him, and ignorantly refuse the Prince of Glory. How shall I benefit them, but with a clear knowledge of the Gospel, understanding well its scheme of truth, and really feeling its sanctifying and enlightening power? For this I must ever seek. O how blessed is a settled, clear, informed, and undoubting mind in the things of God! This makes an useful and valued witness.

SECOND. Then *much also depends upon my fidelity.* I must not withhold the Saviour's testimony. He has enlarged my heart, and opened my mouth, that I might be an useful witness in his cause. I must not conceal the truth. I hear much that is called Christianity, which is not his Gospel. The Gospel is not a

mere scheme of sacraments and forms. It is not a mere improvement of man's own powers, that he may save himself. It is the publication of a complete salvation in Christ. He has finished the salvation of man, and he applies it to man by his Holy Spirit, through faith in the heart. So he has saved me. So he will save others. So must I testify. My trumpet must not give an uncertain sound. I must tell his truth. He saves man by converting him. The sinner must be born again, by the Holy Spirit, before he can see the kingdom of God. Ah, what fidelity this requires; and what experience of the truth such fidelity demands! If a witness is not faithful, he is worthless. No dependence can be placed upon him. It is often difficult and painful to be a faithful witness for Christ. Much opposition may be raised up against it. I need, therefore, constant help from him; but I will not deny him, or betray him.

THIRD. But *much also depends upon my bold-*

ness. I may meet with great hostility. The world has no love for Christ. If I am faithful I may suffer sometimes. I may suffer much. I must therefore be strong in the Lord, for the testimony which he has given me. I must speak of him before kings, and not be ashamed. He will stand by me. He will give me a mouth and wisdom. He will defend me from evil; or he will make my sufferings turn to me for a testimony. At any rate, nothing must forbid my open and faithful witness. And why should I fear? There is no power in man to injure me. He who is on my side is above all. He can maintain my cause. I am to go forward. I may be alone,—alone in my house,—alone among my earthly friends. They may be all out of the way of truth. How much may depend upon my bearing a faithful testimony for Christ! O let not their blood lie at my door. My duty will always look more formidable in anticipation than it is in fact. I will cast myself upon him, and try to fulfil it.

FOURTH. But *then none of the results depend upon me.* I am not the Judge nor the Ruler. The government is upon his shoulder. He can bear it with success. He will accomplish his own plans in his own way. Present aspects may often be very discouraging. My heart may tremble much for the ark of God. The Lord will bring to pass his own counsel. He will lose none of his elect. My responsibility is for a faithful testimony for him. He will make it accomplish what seems best to him. He often accomplishes very important results by very inferior and unlikely instruments. This is a blessed thought to me. It encourages, animates, and supports me. The Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. I may be without anxiety or carefulness,—without fear or alarm. No enemy can finally prevail. No weapon formed against Christ, can prosper in the end. Let me then fulfil my dispensation without doubt, or fear, or hesitation. Let me finish my testimony. Always stand faithfully by my Saviour's cause, whether it seem prosper-

ous or failing. Duty is to be performed. Events are all his. Well is it they are so. Well for me. Well for all.

FIFTH. How *valuable* is such a witness for Christ in this sinful world. Clear and intelligent, faithful and open, bold and unflinching, calm and confident in him. O that he would make me such a witness for his cause, and give me liberty and power always to speak and to act for him. Thus shall I be useful to men. Thus may I be an honor to him.

Shall I my blessed Lord deny?
Or leave the fold of Christ to fly?
Forbid it, Lord! the heathen's rage
Shall never spoil thine heritage.

Boldly my soul, no dangers fear,
Thy Saviour's arm is ever near;
Rather than his dear name deny,
O seek his strength, for him to die.

Meditation Thirty-Fourth.

LABORERS IN THE HARVEST.

Laborers into his harvest.—St. Matthew ix. 38.

The Lord's harvest is the salvation of men. The wheat he gathers into his garner are the redeemed souls of his people. They are the good seed which he sows in the field of this world, and which he is to reap in the everlasting glories of the world to come. To cultivate this harvest, he employs the labors and ministry of men. To reap it,—to separate the tares from the wheat, he commissions an angelic agency. They carry each saint to his home of glory. They will gather all at last to the kingdom provided for them from the foundation of the world. Among men, the Lord selects and employs a special ministry of indi-

viduals, who are set apart as laborers in his harvest. It is their whole business, the appointed occupation of their life. But surely the labor and ministry are not confined to them. All the servants of Christ are to be workers together with him, in preparing his field for harvest. It is every Christian's duty. It is my duty. I am to be a laborer in the Lord's harvest. As one of his laborers,

FIRST. I ought to have *a clear perception of the purpose for which I live.* This is my dispensation. This is the design, and the privilege of my being as a disciple of Christ. To gather with him. To build up his kingdom. To glorify his name. I cannot think of a lower end as worthy of life at all. Every earthly object will fade. Every earthly employment will pass away. Every mere selfish end will perish. What then shall I have as the result? Ah, how low is the thought, to live for mere appetite, or for earthly gain, or human applause, or relative rank and power!

Poor, miserable employments of my immortality. Let me rise above them, and feel that, like my Divine Master, I was born to testify his truth,—and by example, and effort, and influence, in every way to gather his elect,—that by all means, I may save some. This is the only result of life which will abide, when earth has gone. The only attainment which will satisfy when life is surveyed in retrospection from eternity. In every relation of human life I am there, to save and edify the souls for whom the Saviour died. For this will I labor. Any lower end, if this be absent, is not worth the work of a single day.

SECOND. I ought to have *a high appreciation of the importance of this work.* Nay, how can I fail to have? If it were sufficiently important to bring the Son of God to earth, and to endure all his sufferings and labors for men, how can I too highly exalt its importance? This was the joy which was set before him. This is the satisfaction of the travail of his soul.

This is the joy of angels who minister to him. This was the upholding of apostles in their work. This has been the employment and delight of all the servants of God. Can I ever undervalue it? O, what will seem to me hereafter the salvation of a soul! Yes, a single soul. If one, shining in all the glories of redemption, taught the loving kindness of the Lord shall say, I was the instrument of bringing him there! And perhaps there may be many such. What joy will fill my heart! Well, how soon may all this be! Can I have then a higher end in life? And when the Lord says, "Go work in my harvest"—opening to me any door of influence, or usefulness, to the souls for whom he died,—I will feel it ever to be the highest privilege of my being.

THIRD. I ought *to be earnestly engaged in it.* Every variety of instrument is provided for me,—suited to every variety of character, talent, and station. I cannot seclude this labor-

ing in the Lord's harvest to any one particular part of the labor. The most inferior laborer in the field is as important in his place as the highest. There are diversities of gifts and differences of administration, but the same Lord, the same Spirit, the same work. I may not preach, but I can sustain and uphold the preacher. I may not translate the Scriptures, but I may print them, or give them, or send them abroad. I may not be the chief member of the body, but I may be a member, and be indispensable in my place to the happiness and growth of the whole. I will work then for my Saviour, wherever he has placed me; whatever he has given me to do; however he is ready to employ me; to whomsoever he is pleased to send me. Here am I. I will try each day to do something in this great work in which he is engaged. Every enemy is busy. Every agency of evil is active. The power of Satan is in full blast. O let me be active, and zealous, and engaged also, in the great work of the Lord upon the earth.

FOURTH. I shall *certainly be successful in my work.* My Saviour's harvest must succeed. Tares may grow with his wheat, but the wheat cannot be turned into tares. His corn may be sifted through the earth, but not one grain shall fall to the ground. This is the only certainly successful cause. Everything else may fail,—must fail. Christ can never fail. If I work with him faithfully, I gather wages unto everlasting life. How blessed is this hope! I can do something to promote his plans. What can I do?—I am but one; but I am one,—and all that is done with him is done securely. His elect will be gathered, though I refuse to help. Yes; but I shall lose all part and portion in the work,—the only work that is to stand forever. How encouraging is this certain prospect of success! What light it gives in darkness!—what strength in temptation!—what defence in danger!—what boldness in the day of battle! Each soldier may fall, but the army is victorious. The fall of each in the warfare, is only an earlier entrance into glory. We

shall all welcome each other, and shout the triumphs of our Great Leader in the end. O let me work then with all my heart, and all my strength, and all my life, in the harvest of the Lord!

FIFTH. Thus the laborers in the Lord's harvest are distinguished. They understand their proper work,—they highly appreciate it,—they earnestly labor in it,—they are always hopeful and sure of success. Lord, help me thus to work for thee. I would turn from every vanity to thy service; I would count everything beside but loss for thee. O help and keep me by thy power.

Though in the outward church below,
The wheat and tares together grow;
Jesus ere long will weed the crop,
And pluck the tares in anger up.

We seem alike when thus we meet,
Strangers might think we all were wheat;
But to the Lord's All-searching eyes,
Each heart appears without disguise.

Meditation Thirty-Fifth.

FOLLOWERS OF GOD.

Followers of God.—Ephesians, v. i.

"Followers" here, is literally "imitators." It is an old proverb, that men will always imitate the being whom they worship. All the records of Paganism, ancient and modern, prove this. The history of Christianity proves it also. True worship is always actual imitation. But God is invisible, and thus inaccessible as an example. Yes. But he has revealed in the Holy Scriptures the principles of his own government,—the way in which he may be said to walk, in his guidance of men. He has become really manifest in the person of Jesus Christ, in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. There he is an example,—ac-

tually living and visible. I can follow Christ as a leader. I can imitate him as a pattern. I can become conformed to him as a standard. This I would do and be. If I am one of his people, I shall be thus conformed to his image. If I wish to manifest myself as such, this will be and must be my effort.

But let me consider,

FIRST. That *God walked in love.* The love of God my Saviour, who can describe? In his whole work for man it had a length, and breadth, and depth, which passeth knowledge. In every part of his earthly work, love was the constant rule of his life, the atmosphere in which he moved. It was pardoning love,—consoling love,—forbearing love,—active love,—tender and compassionate love. It was universal love. Even when he rebuked, he did it in love. I see him always comforting the mourning, teaching the ignorant, bearing with the erring, never reviling or resisting the violent. How beautiful is this pattern! I would

follow it,—I would attain it. I know it is a path of happiness. I am sure it will be to me a way of constant peace. But I need a divine power to enable me to follow this example. Let me constantly seek this gracious power,—remember the hostility of my own heart against it. Never yield to the sinful influence of my own temper; and thus in every relation walk in love, as Christ also hath walked before me.

SECOND. God my Saviour *walked in holiness.* It was a pure and spotless path in which he went. Even his enemies acknowledged they found no guile in him. No sin could be laid to his charge. But it was not mere negative holiness. Every active and living trait of holiness was there. All his acts, and influence, and instructions tended to produce entire love to God and love to men. His was a life of prayer, of spiritual communion with God, of tender benevolence to men. Every one who was with him might have been the better for his presence. This is holiness. Thus he reigns and

rules still. His command to me is, "Be holy, for I am holy." I long to follow him in this path. What a burdensome service is sin! How weary am I daily of its power, and its effects! But O what watchfulness, and prayer, and determination, and effort are required in me to walk in holiness! I find an unceasing evil within, when I would do good. But, notwithstanding, I must and will press on in following my Lord. He will strengthen and uphold me by his own Spirit dwelling within me. If I am sincere and determined, he will bear with my infirmities, and enable me to do his will.

THIRD. God my Saviour *walked in patience.* His life on earth was a life of suffering. He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. They whom he loved, returned his love with reproaches and sorrows. But he was forbearing and patient with all. I hear no complaining, no reviling, no reproaches, no bitterness from him. How lovely is this pattern! How happy is the heart which attains

it! My life on earth is a life of trial. I can hardly call it a life of suffering, I am so encompassed with earthly benefits and mercies. But I have often demands for patient submission. I need the spirit of quiet and satisfied concession to the will of God. I often lose what I desire,—am disappointed in what I gain,—am defeated in what I pursue,—suffer in that which I possess,—am injured by those whom I have loved. Well, this is God's appointment, and this was his chosen path. Let me be patient, quiet, enduring, and allow his will to be done, without a single complaint from me. Thus may I follow him, though afar off.

FOURTH. God my Saviour *walked in joyful anticipation.* For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross and despised the shame. That joy was his heavenly kingdom and eternal glory. It was the glorious result of his work of suffering in the full redemption of his people. It was a sufficient and a constant support. Under its influence he suffered

his appointed course, and then entered into his glory. Thus would I follow him. I would enjoy the bright and blessed hope which he bestows. His patient sufferings have obtained my glorious hope. By this hope I would be supported, as an anchor to my soul, both sure and steadfast. How cheerful it should make me in duty! How contented in losses! How tranquil in adversity! How hopeful in contests! How abiding and faithful in seasons of darkness! Ah, soon it will all appear. I shall see clearly, and know as I am known. Soon the shadows will flee, and the Sun of Righteousness will arise. I will look forward with joyful hope, in certain faith, that my Saviour will appear in his glory, and I shall be permitted to appear with him.

FIFTH. This will be a most *happy and influential walk.* If I thus follow Jesus my Lord and my God, in love, in holiness, in patience, in joyful anticipation, I shall not only enjoy the blessedness of the path myself, but I shall

be made the instrument of leading others to it also. Such a walk makes religious character attractive and valuable. It shows the power of religion. It honors the Saviour. It convinces and silences the world. Thus let me follow Christ.

O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb!

Return, O holy dove return—
Sweet messenger of rest!
I hate the sins which made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast.

Meditation Thirty-Sixth.

OBEDIENT CHILDREN.

As Obedient Children.—1 Peter. ii. 14.

It is an unspeakable privilege to be the children of God. But there is an influence and responsibility connected with it also. Children are expected to be witnesses for their father, laborers for him, and followers of him also. Happy are the children who have a father, to whom all these relations may be happy and honorable. Such a happiness belongs to the children of God. But all these relations depend upon the present title. They must be obedient children. Obedience has reference to commands, as imitation has respect to example. The children of God are all obedient children. If any will prove their rightful claim to the

title, they are to prove it by their obedience. Am I one of God's adopted children? Then must obedience to him distinguish my whole character.

But to be obedient,

FIRST. I must *understand his commands.* There can be no real obedience without this. I may accidentally obey when I am ignorant; but I cannot systematically obey unless I am informed. God has not left me ignorant of his will. He has given me his word. He has spoken in it most plainly and simply. I need not be mistaken. I cannot be unless I choose to be. He has taught me what he requires of me, and I must study and understand his will. He commands me to repent,—to turn from every sin,—to believe in and to love his beloved Son,—to walk with him humbly and submissively in all things,—to be benevolent, faithful and sincere in my relations to men. But for this I must study his commands. The possession of his word is a great privilege, and

I must faithfully improve it. Thus shall I understand what he requires. There is no relation of my life to which his commands will not be adapted. If I truly seek to know his will there, I never can be at a loss to understand it. This will give me the path of a scriptural, spiritual walk of holy obedience to God, in which I can go forward intelligently and clearly.

SECOND. I must *not hesitate in fulfilling them.* When God clearly speaks, there is no room for discussion or opinion. The reason or justice of the command he perfectly understands. My part is to fulfil it. I am simply to do that which he orders, whatever it may be. If the precept be clear, there can be no question. If it be not, then I am to study his word, and endeavor to understand his will. But when his will is known I cannot hesitate. Obedience may be inconvenient. It may require much sacrifice. It may sometimes be painful, or even apparently dangerous; but even then the

rule is already laid down for me. I am to fear him who can cast both body and soul into hell,—who can preserve me too in every danger. There is no one else to fear. Obedience to him cannot but be happy, secure, and gainful in the end. O let me follow out this simple spirit! Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do? I would gladly follow and obey thee in all things. Give me strength that I may do it. But ah, if I hold back, and hesitate, and argue, and try to avoid that which he clearly sets before me, how can I be one of his obedient children? Every question whether manifest duty is to be fulfilled is a temptation. Let me cast them all aside, and arise at once, and obey the will of God.

THIRD. *My motive must be, to do the will of God.* I must not obey Divine commands because they are convenient and easy, or when they are convenient and easy. This is not obeying God, but my own will. It is a mere

following of my own pleasure. I must not obey because others obey. I may thus be led to follow a multitude to do evil also. No; I must obey because it is God's own command. This must be enough. And this must be alone. It may make me singular. It has often made others a gazing-stock to men. But I cannot look at that. This is the way which he has laid down before me, and I must walk in it. The fashion of this world will often oppose it. The pride of man will often despise it. The reason of man will sometimes scoff at it. All this may be; but God is wiser than men; and it is far better to obey him than them. The difficulties of such obedience are always greatest at the beginning. Men cease to trouble after they begin to despise. They will leave me alone. Happy will it be for me. But I wish to be able to say of my whole course of life, "this is the will of God in Christ Jesus, concerning me." God has spoken. I believe. Therefore I obey, not conferring with flesh and blood.

FOURTH. *My recompense is his acceptance.* I hardly dare to think or speak of any recompense to myself. So great is my sinfulness, that I can deserve nothing but the wages of sin, which is death. But God has been pleased to proclaim such a thought to me, in various shapes. It cannot be wrong, therefore, for me to consider it. He will not forget my labors of love. He will accept me according to that which I have, if there be a willing mind. He will acknowledge a cup of cold water given truly in his name. The reward will not be the reward of my obedience, but of the perfect obedience of my Saviour. But the acceptance is of my works for his sake. And this acceptance is sure. Men may not approve. I may even fail to do what I desire to do. I may sometimes appear even to produce the opposite result. But God knows my motives, my desires, my efforts, my obstacles, and he will accept me in much in which others may condemn me, and in which I may condemn myself. To this point will I look—I will try in

everything to please him, and look to his acceptance for my reward. How glorious and satisfying will that reward be! One welcoming smile of Jesus will more than repay me for all the trials which any obedience has cost.

FIFTH. Nothing can be *more desirable* to me than such an obedience to God. Intelligent, unhesitating, simple regard to him, and a constant reference to his acceptance. O that I may thus walk with him. Not fashioning myself after any of my former lusts; but striving to be holy in all manner of conversation, because he is holy. Thus shall my life proceed, in a simple, clear, and happy path, till I meet my gracious Lord in glory. And he will receive me.

Lord, I come to thee for rest,
Take possession of my breast;
There thy blood-bought right maintain,
And without a rival reign.

Show me what I have to do,
Every hour my strength renew;
Let me live a life of faith,
Let me die a joyful death.

Meditation Thirty-Seventh.

WORKMEN NOT ASHAMED.

A Workman that needeth not to be Ashamed.—2 Timothy, ii. 15

Much of our influence depends upon our own stand and bearing. There is a self-respect which becomes every Christian. He is to let no man despise him. He is to be an example to others. He is conscious of the privileges bestowed upon him; of the relations in which he stands; of the justice of his choice; of the glory which awaits him. He is therefore bound to walk worthy of his high calling. Should such a man as he flee? God has called him to important duties, important responsibilities, important issues. How can he dishonor his profession and give occasion to the enemy to blaspheme? This is his appointed

position,—higher than the kings of the earth; and it is his duty to carry out its influence, and not to sacrifice his Master's authority and rights. In this happy and exalted company I profess to be. Am I really so? One of God's appointed workmen in the world?—Employed in his service, and pledged to do his will?

FIRST. Then I have no reason to be ashamed of *the Master whom I serve.* I ought publicly and boldly to maintain his honor. If I could see him, his glory would overwhelm me with astonishment and delight. His appearing will clothe his enemies with dismay and terror. The angels of God delight to adore and honor him. Why should I ever be ashamed to say I belong to him, and mean to follow his commands? I know he is the King of kings. The heaven and earth is full of his glory. The whole world has witnessed to his forbearance and power. My whole life has testified and displayed his love. I need never be ashamed of him. It has been the highest honor of my

life that he called me out of a sinful world,—to know and to follow him. I ought always to confess him. If I am ashamed of him here, he will be ashamed of me hereafter. Nay, if he should be ashamed of me even here, what could I do? If he were ashamed to intercede for me, to protect me, to own me, to accompany me, to bless me? And well he may be, for my whole life has been a course of ingratitude and folly. But what reason can I ever have for being ashamed of him? O may he save me from such wickedness as this!

SECOND. Then I need not be ashamed of *the cause in which I am engaged.* Why should I be? It is the cause of Christ. I am engaged to be a servant of the Lord of hosts,—to spread his truth,—to edify his kingdom,—to gather his elect,—to make his name known and glorious. No cause can be of equal importance. All heaven delights to be occupied in it. Angels rejoice to minister in it. The highest earthly minds have felt honored in being em-

ployed in it. Why should I be ashamed of it? It is perfectly holy, benevolent, and pure, —it is rational, intellectual, and elevated,—it is triumphant and gloriously progressive,—it produces the highest blessings and honors for humanity,—it will obtain an universal exaltation. Why should I be ashamed of it? No; however imperfectly I may attain, or manifest, or fulfil its claims, I cannot but feel that it is a cause worthy of my utmost effort, and my entire devotion and zeal. I can never be too earnest, or too zealous, or too active, or too engaged in it. The more I do, and get, and display, of this glorious cause, the more honorable and the happier it will be for me. Why should I ever be ashamed of it?

THIRD. But I need not be ashamed *of my pursuit of this great object.* Why should I be? To what more noble or exalted end can I consecrate my being? But my own actual pursuit is so very infirm, and imperfect, and defective. I know it is. I am truly ashamed to

think I began so late. It is sad to remember my wasted trifling days, when I was ignorant and a rebel. I am truly ashamed that I have followed my Lord at such a distance. It is a grief to remember my many backslidings, and sinful falls, and wanderings from him. I am truly ashamed of my want of real, living, burning zeal, for Christ. It is mournful to think of every reluctance, or withholding, or indifference in my obedience to him. Over all these I mourn. I am ashamed of them all. But after all, I am really sincere and determined in my pursuit of my Saviour's commands.—I could not say I am not; and I am not ashamed of that. I am full of defects, but I am not a hypocrite. I am infirm in everything, but I do truly desire to do the will of God completely; to honor my Saviour in all things. And why should I be ashamed of that? I love to pray,—to understand his word,—to obey his commands. I long to love them all more. I could not deny this. Why should I ever be ashamed of it?

FOURTH. I need not be ashamed of *the results of this service.* Its present results are often apparent loss and dishonor. Many have suffered much for Christ. I may be required also to do so. But they have always counted it an honor and a gift, to be permitted to suffer. They have all proved happy in the hour of suffering, and happier for it. Their names have been more highly honored in consequence of their very sufferings. It will be just so with me, if I suffer for Christ, or suffer with him. I shall be able to count it all joy. Why then should I be ashamed of this? But these are very transitory results. They will soon pass by,—and then the full result shall be brought out, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. O no! If man is immortal,—if I am really to live forever,—if I have a soul that cannot die, I need never be ashamed of counting everything else of no value in comparison. Such a course is rational and just in the highest degree. And when Christ shall bring out the full reward of his righteousness in endless glory, I shall lift

up my head with joy. This I believe;—this I know. It is as real in my view now, as it will be then. Why then need I ever be ashamed?

FIFTH. *O glorious service!* Am I indeed one of Christ's workmen? never will I be ashamed. I will glory in my Master, in his cause, in my pursuit of it, in every result which it may bring. I shall lift up my head before kings and not be ashamed. It is the highest honor of my being. Let all my influence be connected with it, and flow out of it.

Ashamed of Jesus! Yes I may,
When I've no sins to wash away;
No foe to fear, no boon to crave,
No guilt to cleanse, no soul to save.

'Till then, still clinging to his side,
I'll boast a Saviour crucified.
And may my lasting portion be,
My Saviour not ashamed of me.

Meditation Thirty-Eighth.

APPROVED UNTO GOD.

Approved unto God.—2 Timothy, ii. 15.

THIS is a title I may well desire. It presents the only real question in my life. There is no other subject in my personal conduct or relations that is worth considering separate from this. If I am really approved of God, then I must be right in everything else, for he cannot approve that which is wrong. If every duty is fulfilled according to his will, my obligations to all others are discharged. This is what he commands. Less than this, he will not approve. But he cannot approve anything in me, in its own worth. My very best acts are all defiled with sin. He first pardons and accepts me, in his Son,—acknowledges me per-

sonally as his child and servant,—then guides me by his Spirit to fulfil his will. And then approves my work, though it is all infirm and unworthy. This is the comfort of his people. And this is one important feature and instrument of their influence abroad.

Am I one of them thus approved of God?

FIRST. Then I shall *be very indifferent to the judgment of men.* Why should I ever feel concerned about that? They must judge according to the appearance. Very often they do not judge righteous judgment. If I am to follow their opinions in everything, I shall be tossed like a wave of the sea. They disagree on every side. They cannot read my heart. They do not understand my motives. They make no allowance for my infirmities. They cannot exercise a disinterested judgment even of what they see. I shall pay but little attention to their judgments. I will try to do right in everything, rather than to appear right to them. Yet, I am to despise no man. I am

not to be indifferent to the effect of my conduct upon them, especially upon the welfare of their souls. I must endeavor to do everything to their edification. But I cannot be governed by their judgments, nor be moved by their censure. I must live above them all, and strive to be approved in the sight of God. His judgment is according to truth.

SECOND. Then *God will approve in my own conscience.* He speaks there by the voice of his Spirit. He makes me know what he requires of me, and gives me a blessed consciousness in doing his will. I know that the conscience is often dark, ignorant, and deceived. I cannot rest upon all its suggestions as an infallible guide. But when I sincerely desire to do the will of God, and honestly strive to know what he requires of me, and faithfully to follow it, I shall have the witness of his Spirit in my conscience, that he approves and accepts me. This will always be a source of peace and comfort which will outweigh every outward hostil-

ity of man. With a conscience void of offence, I may lay me down in peace, and sleep, for God maketh me to dwell in safety. It is the great happiness of the Christian in the path of duty. It announces to him the approbation of God. It strengthens him for every duty and labor. It makes him not to count his life dear unto himself, so that he may thus finish his course with joy. Let me exercise myself herein continually. With God's approval within, I shall always rejoice. I will look for it. I will ask him for it. I will labor to maintain a mind that can intelligently and justly receive it.

THIRD. Then *my conduct and character are to be be conformed to his word.* This must remain the great and abiding standard. Forever is this word settled in heaven. According to its principles and commands must I be judged,—according to them must I be governed. My life may be very imperfect and infirm, and yet be conformed to God's word. It judges according to the integrity of my principles, not

according to the perfection of my fruits. By its standard my conduct must be tried. Let the church thus try it. Let my family thus try it. Let the world thus try it. By this standard I must abide. If I am living and walking according to it, then I am approved of God; if his word justifies and sustains me, the opinions of men are of no account. O that I might have a more simple regard to this great standard, and be more anxious and determined to walk by it! The day will come that all will and must approve a course that was so laid out and so controlled. That day will try the ways of the people of God, and they shall have their praise of him.

FOURTH. Then *his providence will also sustain me.* He will make all things work together for good to them that love him. His word is full of promises, which cover the whole course of my life. They will surely be fulfilled. He will stand by me when others forsake me. He will make the wrath of man to praise him.

He will make his truth triumphant, when enemies assail it. He will give victory to his chosen in the day of battle. Why should I ever doubt it? He is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? Ah, how easily can he make foes stumble and fall! How easily, if my ways please him, can he make even mine enemies to be at peace with me. My reputation is his property, an instrument in his service, and he will guard it. He will bring forth my righteousness like the light. Let me trust in him, and fear not. Let me go forth in my appointed path, and leave him to sustain me, and show his sentence according to his will. He is near that justifieth me. I will set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

FIFTH. How *precious* is this divine approval! Approved unto God! What can be better for me? I shall outlive all other judgments. But his remaineth. I may well be indifferent to them. But O, to have his voice in

my conscience sustaining me,—his sacred word confirming me,—and his gracious providence justifying me,—how great and inestimable is this blessing to me! His future approbation I do not now connect with this. Let me think of this under its appropriate title,—His present approval! This I will pursue. This I will prize.

Give to the winds thy fears—
  Hope, and be undismayed,
God hears thy sighs, and counts thy tears;
  God shall lift up thy head;

Through wars, through clouds, and storms,
  He gently clears thy way;
Wait then his time, so shall thy night
  Soon end in joyous day.

Meditation Thirty-Ninth.

STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS.

As strangers and pilgrims.—1 Peter, ii. 11.

From the titles which mark our influence, we may proceed to some which mark our prospects as the people of God. These prospects are present and future,—in the life that now is, and the life which is to come. The present title truly describes the whole present course of the Christian. He is a citizen of a better country. His present condition is temporary. Thus have all the servants of God confessed that they were strangers on the earth. Such was our Great Master and Leader. Far more a stranger than most of his disciples. He had not where to lay his head. His gracious providence permits us the enjoyment of multi-

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plied earthly blessings. But he requires us not to be of the world,—to remember that the time is short. The fashion of this world passeth away.

But am I one of Christ's strangers and pilgrims?

FIRST. Then I have *a home elsewhere, and I must seek it.* No man on earth is without a home. No being in the universe without a place. The stranger in any land must be a citizen of some other. I am a stranger on earth; but I have a home in heaven. I, is not my dying body, more than my outward garments. It is my lasting, living nature. It is my imperishable soul. That is I. And where is the home for that, but the place and presence of the Saviour who has redeemed it. This home I must seek. I have never seen it. I was born in a foreign land. But it is described to me. It is secured for me. I am invited to it. Many of my brethren and sisters in Christ have already gone to it. My Gracious Saviour

urges me to be ready for it. Thus do I desire to live alway. In every duty, in every trial, in every joy, in every arrangement, remembering my home, and making all my calculations for that.

SECOND. Then I am *journeying homeward, and I must be ready for it.* I am not only a stranger, but a pilgrim also. It indicates motion, not rest. An end and object in my journey, not a bargaining and gaining in the foreign land. My daily course is a travelling onward. I am a home-bound pilgrim, travelling to Zion, with my face thitherward. Every day brings me nearer. A pilgrimage is not a rapid journey. Not a race. My life is also a race. But, as a pilgrimage, its characteristic is endurance and perseverance. The fare may be hard. Difficulties may be many. Dangers may encompass. But there is a glorious convoy, and a heavenly guide. The circumstances are all arranged without me. What I am to look after is the pilgrim's mind. How happy

will be my home! How attractive the distant gleams I get of it! How beautifully it appears as I approach it! I must be ready. I am almost at the river's edge. To morrow I may cross. O let me arise and wash my clothes, and trim my lamp, and bind up my treasures, and be ready to leave behind all that my pilgrimage has required, with gratitude, but without regret. Blessed prospect of my happy rest!

THIRD. Then I *must not delay or be entangled on the road.* As a stranger and pilgrim, I have little to do with what I see, except to get instruction from it. There is nothing that I have ever seen, for which I would exchange my heavenly home. There is much that is pleasant; much that is worthy of notice; much for which I may well be grateful, on my journey. Food for thought, for reflection, for admonition, for improvement. But I must gather up these materials, and hasten on. This is not my rest. I am sometimes very wearied,—often

strongly solicited,—alas! too often strangely indolent and inclined to yield. But it will not do. I can give no slumber to my soul here. I must start afresh, and shake myself from the dust, and press on. I must have no unfinished works in the wilderness. As each day's journey is finished, I would have it completed really, and not feel that I have to go back over it again. Happy is such a pilgrimage! Dispensing benefits everywhere. Entangled with snares nowhere. Thus would I journey on.

FOURTH. Then *perfect contentment should be my daily companion.* My pilgrimage is all laid out for me. It has its dark and cloudy days; its miry and sandy roads; its mountains and rivers to cross. This is natural and reasonable. Why should it not be so? But it has also many bright and pleasant spots; many precious and happy scenes; many delightful and instructive companions. God has set the one over against the other. I have every reason to be contented. I do not want,—I cannot

want, provisions for my soul's welfare. If my body is sometimes worn and burdensome, this is a small evil. I desire to sing songs of praise in my pilgrimage. To go home with songs of joy and triumph. Alas! my difficulty is never so much that my pilgrimage is too trying and sorrowful; as that it is too attractive and entangling. Lusts of the flesh and of the mind, ensnare me in the world, and make me too fond and not too wearied of it. Let me never complain. Every evil is transitory. I shall soon be at home. A happy, cheerful temper becomes me. I will daily try to gain it and to exercise it.

FIFTH. Thus *ought* my Christian pilgrimage to pass. Remembering my heavenly home. Earnest and persevering in my journey towards it. Never entangled or dallying on my way. Always contented and thankful for every blessing. How happy is the pilgrim's lot! How gracious the guidance I receive! How bountiful the love which upholds

me! How glorious the home which welcomes me!

As every day thy mercy spares,
Will bring its trials and its cares,
O Saviour, till my life shall end,
Be thou my counsellor and friend;
Teach me thy precepts all divine,
And be thy pure example mine.

Meditation Fortieth.

LITTLE FLOCK.

Fear not, little flock.—St. Luke, xii. 32.

THIS is a most endearing title. The Saviour would encourage his disciples. Their cares and conflicts are many. Their fears and anxieties are many. Their weakness is constant and extreme. But Jesus suffers them not despond. The title of pilgrims refers to their condition. This refers to their comparative numbers. A little flock travelling together through a hostile region. It was so when Jesus spoke. It has always been so. It is still so. The real disciples of Jesus are a little flock in comparison with the residue of mankind. This title brings out many important thoughts. Am I one of them? Has the Lord brought me truly there?

Then let me remember,

FIRST. That *numbers are no just test of truth.* Men are often deluded with this idea. The majority in earthly society must govern. They can determine the greater convenience of the whole. But it is not so in the cause of truth and of the soul. Paganism and Mohamedism would supersede Christianity even now. The world is ever opposed to Christ. The great body of mankind reject the Gospel. If I belong to Christ, I am one of a few. Even among my own acquaintance, the most may not be truly Christians. My mind must not be deceived. I must be content to maintain the truth alone, if all others forsake it. Thus did Elijah,—thus did Paul,—thus did Athanasius,—thus did Luther. The word of God is still the same,—the will of God is still unchanged. Let me cleave to that, if I am left alone. I will not look out to ask what others think. I will go to the sacred volume, and ask what the Lord says. If I am on his side,

I must be right. Multitudes opposed to me, must never discourage me. God's beloved ones are often hidden in the dens and caves of the earth.

SECOND. That *weakness does not involve insecurity.* Often the feeblest is the most secure even in earthly connections. The little infant will be the most sheltered and guarded one of the household. In the Lord's family, his hand is ever turned to cover the feeble ones. His flock on earth may have no strength. Paganism may ravage them. Popery may murder them. But neither can hurt them. God protects them still. Martyrs may burn alone, while multitudes shout around. But God guards them, and the flames are his chariot of fire for his children. Why should I ever fear because I am weak? Nothing could be done by any strength of mine. Goliah's armor would do me no good. If I am trusting in the Lord, and living by faith in him, he compasseth me as with mountains. He builds a wall

of fire round about me. No enemy can touch a hair of my head without his permission. O, let me cease from looking to the earth, and look upward, from whence cometh my help.

THIRD. That *Jesus does not judge according to the outward appearance.* He asks no help of man. He knoweth them that are his. There may be a great company clothed in scarlet and fine linen, calling themselves his Church. But they cannot deceive him. Pomp and display do not make or mark his Church. His real people may be very unnoticed,—very little known. Their whole aspect may be humble and downcast. They may have no earthly influence or station. They may be put to death by others professedly in his name. All this has been done many times over. But what then? All this does not deceive him. The Lord knoweth his little flock, however despised. O let me not be deceived, or discouraged, by outward appearances either. I would seek the truth; I would follow the

truth; I would abide by the truth; and look up for my Master's acceptance of his own work. He can sustain his own. I would conform my judgments to his. He loves his little flock, though the world hate them and cast them out.

FOURTH. That *God will surely protect his own.* How can I doubt it? How can there be any evil to God's elect? His power, wisdom, goodness, all combine to make them perfectly secure and surely happy. All things are theirs. Both death and life minister to their welfare. The flock of Christ may often appear extremely small. The Gospel may sometimes be almost banished from among men. The wicked may seem to have triumphed. I must take heed. I must not be discouraged, nor cast down, nor dishonor God by unbelief. Old Latimer's dying assurance was, "Brother, we shall this day light such a candle in England, as, by God's grace, will never be put out." This was noble; but it was truth, and duty

Why should I not always think so? God must reign. And if I cleave to his side, I must reign with him. All discouragement and despondency are sinful. I will throw them aside. The Lord can make every feeble one as David. I have nothing to do with difficulties. My business is, to hear the word, to understand the word, to receive the word, and to follow the word, to the end. Everything else God will order. I should be most happy if we were many. I would that all the world were the Lord's prophets. But if all others hold back, he can save by few or by many, and it is my blessed privilege to hold on, never discouraged,—hopeful to the last.

FIFTH. The Saviour's little flock may be *much tempted.* But they are never to lose sight of these blessed facts. They must never forget that numbers do not determine truth; that weakness does not involve insecurity; that Jesus does not judge according to the outward appearance; that God will certainly

protect his people. O these blessed principles will hold me up through every trial. I will keep fast hold of them. By the Saviour's help I will never let them go.

Fair is the lot that's cast for me;
I have an Advocate with thee;
They whom the world caresses most,
Have no such privilege to boast.

Poor though I am, despised, forgot,
Yet God, my God, forsake me not;
And he is safe, and must succeed,
For whom the Lord vouchsafes to plead.

Meditation Forty-First.

PARTAKERS OF FLESH AND BLOOD.

Partakers of Flesh and Blood.—HEBREWS, ii. 14.

IF "pilgrims" reminds me of my journey through a foreign land, and "little flock" brings to view the feeble character of my own company, the present title describes the weakness and infirmities of my own personal nature. It sends me to look within myself; not particularly to discourage me, but to show me the common condition of the children of God on earth. They are all partakers of flesh and blood. Our conflicts, trials, and cares, are all alike. We may therefore sympathize with each other. We know how to help each other in our common course. We stand upon the same ground of complete dependence upon

him who took our nature upon him, to bear our burden, and to procure our salvation. It is a most compassionate and tender title by which the Lord thus designates his people. Am I one? And is this my condition?

FIRST. Then I am *not to be discouraged with my infirmities.* I cannot do the things that I would. How often do I contend without success! What evil thoughts molest my prayers! What sinful tempers start up to gain predominance in my heart! How long do I struggle; but how little do I seem to gain! Now, I well know that all this is sin that dwelleth in me; but I will not make it chosen, wilful sin. I loathe it,—I long for deliverance from it; my heart pants to be free, and to be holy. While, then, I resist and struggle against sin, I know God will not refuse nor reject me. He knows whereof I am made,—he remembers I am but dust. These infirmities annoy me, distress me, but they cannot overcome me. They give me a deeper sense of my sin. But they shall

not be permitted to cast me down. I shall not always be harassed with them. I will look up, and not be discouraged, while I bear them now.

SECOND. Then I must *not be wearied with the contests* which may arise. I have a body of sin to carry. Evil dwelleth within me. It will inevitably provoke contest, unceasing contest. Every day new warfare will arise. Enemies will be subdued; but other enemies will start forth with new resistance. This will be my whole earthly path. Thus the Holy Spirit will renew and sanctify me, by leading me ever to contend. This is God's plan for me. The precious blood of Christ cleanses me from all the guilt of my sin,—the Holy Spirit rescues me from its power, and renews me from my decays. But in this process, I am always to contend. This is wearisome,—to the young Christian often very much so. But I can have no dispensation from it. I must fight as long as I am a partaker of flesh and blood. Let me

not faint,—my work of trial is thus going on. God is thus establishing and settling me. He will thus prepare me for himself, and I am determined not to yield. By his help I will endure even to the end, according to his will.

THIRD. Then I *must not be self-confident.* I can never have anything whereof to glory in myself. I do nothing towards my own salvation. I do not even faithfully act out the strength which I receive from God. How can I have any righteousness of my own? Every remembrance of myself is stained with sin. Every duty of my life is wholly worthless. Each day gives me deeper views of my own iniquity, the hidden evils of my heart. I thus become deeply humbled with a sense of my guilt. I lie down in the dust under a consciousness of my great unworthiness. But where have I anything else? The longer I contend, and the further I proceed in my pilgrimage, my own character only appears the more loathsome and abhorrent. I come at last to

cry out from my broken heart, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" I have nothing else to say. I shall never get beyond that prayer in this life. My Saviour's righteousness will be my only hope, and my only plea, forever. But for that, I should faint and be destroyed.

FOURTH. But then *I am encouraged to trust in a Saviour's sympathy.* He took part of this very flesh and blood. He tasted of all its infirmities and its sorrows for me. He bids me come and trust myself freely to his love. Where else can I go? Where else do I need to go? If it were not for this burden, I should not feel half so deeply my need of him, or the joy of his salvation. This empties me of all self,—this drives me from all dependence on my own duties,—this compels me to seek strength and comfort only in Christ. I could not live a day without him; I should not desire it. It is the knowledge of his grace and mercy which comforts me in all my journey, encourages me to new efforts, and enables me

to feel assured that he who died for me, and ever liveth for me, will never forsake me. My very emptiness gives me comfort, because it requires me the more completely to prove the tenderness and power of my divine Saviour. I thus can glory in infirmities, which render the power of Christ resting upon me more precious and more important.

FIFTH. This is an *invaluable* lesson. How else could I ever be taught it? I am a partaker of flesh and blood. In all things infirm and deficient. Nay, in all things corrupt and unholy. I learn, then, never to be discouraged, nor wearied, nor self-confident, nor doubtful of my Saviour. He can carry me through. The more humbly I walk with him, the more surely he will carry me through; and I shall drop this flesh and blood, and see his face in glory. The deeper is my feeling of my need,—the happier will be my experience of his abounding and eternal love,—the more useful can I be to others.

I'll tell the lost despairing poor,
No more to doubt—to fear no more:
For you a gracious Saviour died;
For you the Lamb was crucified.

The more rebellious you have been,
Scarlet and crimson, stained with sin,
The more you need the Saviour's grace,
And want his freely-given peace.

Meditation Forty-Second.

RICH IN FAITH.

Rich in Faith.—James, ii. 5,

Among the titles which describe the present condition of the people of God, this is very important. If they are pilgrims, and a little flock, and partakers of all the infirmities of flesh and blood, they are rich in faith. All things are theirs, because they are Christ's. They are full. They reign as kings, through the riches of his grace. Poor in this world always. Its best provisions are a poor treasure. But heirs of the kingdom which God hath provided, and for which he hath chosen them. How can any condition be more exalted or encouraging? This is their present prospect. It will attend them through life, wherever they

may be. If I am one of them, this great privilege belongs to me. I cannot be poor. I can never be destitute. As one of God's chosen people,

FIRST. I am rich *in the possession of this faith itself.* Faith is a gift,—a very precious and important gift of God. It has been given to me to believe on his name. My natural mind was an unbelieving one. I lived by sense. I walked by sight alone. But God has brought me out of this state of darkness, and given me a precious faith,—a like precious faith with all his people. I could never have believed in his word without his gift. Now I can know him; I can trust in him; I can love him; I can seek him; I can realize his presence; I can follow him; I cannot be happy without him. I have freely exchanged everything which is seen and temporal for the things which are unseen and are eternal. But this is all his gift. It does not come from any exercise of my power, or any pre-eminence in my

reason or will. It is God who hath enlightened my understanding, and hath brought me to a knowledge of his truth. And in the very possession of a simple filial faith in him, I am rich.

SECOND. I am rich *in the security which faith reveals.* He that believeth cannot be confounded. Nothing can overturn the mind which abides in faith. Nothing can destroy me which does not first unsettle and destroy my faith. While I continue to believe, I am secure against every danger. Faith in God meets every charge, and every foe with perfect success. Does conscience accuse? Faith reveals divine forgiveness in the blood of Christ. Does the law condemn? Faith proclaims everlasting righteousness in the obedience of Christ. Does the world persecute or tempt? Faith assures of triumphant protection in the power of Christ. Does Satan threaten? Faith announces unlimited victory in the kingdom of Christ. Faith meets every objection. It says,

"Only believe; all things are possible to him who believeth." Thus it makes every thing secure. It brings good out of all evil. It makes all things work together for good to those who love God. What perfect security is this? And though I am a poor journeying pilgrim, in a little flock, compassed with infirmities; yet how perfectly secure am I, while thus believing,—rich in faith!

THIRD. I am rich *in the objects which faith proclaims.* What an amazing inheritance does it display! Things present and things to come! Divine promises covering every condition of life! Meeting every human sorrow, and every earthly trial! Spanning over the whole journey to the grave! Planting blessings in anticipation, in every place whither I am to come! Illuminating the valley of the shadow of death! Creating the brightest and most blessed hopes in the darkest hours! Unveiling glories inconceivable in a world to come! Spreading out before me an immor-

tality of rest and active joy in the presence of God! Sealing all with an eternity of happiness in Christ my Lord! Surely I am rich if all these things are mine. And as surely they all are mine, if I am believing in Christ. To whom else are they promised, but to him that believeth? And to what else in him are they promised, but to his faith? The Holy Scriptures are overflowing with these exceeding great and precious promises. And they are all the property of those whom God hath chosen, however poor in this world, as the heirs of his kingdom. Well may the Spirit call them rich in faith!

FOURTH. I am rich *in the peace which faith imparts.* The effect of righteousness is peace. God will keep those in perfect peace who stay on him, because they trust in him. This is a precious gift in my earthly pilgrimage. A mind at peace! At peace, amidst the storms of earth, the hostility of men, the adversities of human life, the consciousness of inward sin.

Nothing can be more valuable. He that believeth, shall not be confounded,—shall not make haste. Why should he? All things are naked and open to him with whom he has to do. All things are ordered and settled by his authority and will. My days are numbered, and my ways are ordered by his wisdom. What have I to do, but simply to obey, calmly to trust, patiently to wait, earnestly to love, faithfully to follow my Glorious Head? There are no evils, there can be none, to him that believeth. Here will I rest, till my Lord appear. Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief.

FIFTH. This is *wealth indeed!* There is no other riches. A divine gift, divine security, divine treasures, divinely-imparted peace! Surely this is rich in faith. Here do I desire and purpose to abide, in simple, humble confidence in God to the end. I commit myself to him. I cast myself upon him. I trust my-

self to him. By his grace sustaining me, I will never forsake him.

Thus when the Christian pilgrim views
By faith his mansion in the skies,
The sight his fainting strength renews,
And wings his speed to reach the prize.

The hope of heaven his spirit cheers;
No more he grieves for sorrows past;
Nor any future conflict fears,
So he may safe arrive at last.

Meditation Forty-Third.

FOLLOWERS OF THAT WHICH IS GOOD.

Followers of that which is good.—1 Peter, iii. 13.

How much of man's wealth consists in anticipations! There is the Christian's wealth also. He is poor in person; but he is rich in partnership. He has nothing of his own; but he is one with the Lord, who possesses everything in heaven and earth. What he is in the present life, is very manifest. Full of trials. Often a person of a sorrowful spirit. What he shall be hereafter, does not now appear. But it is in no degree uncertain. When his Lord shall appear, he will be like him. As he hath borne the image of the earthy, he will also bear the image of the heavenly. This is a future good, but it is not a contingent, doubtful good. This

the Christian pursues, in every path and in every change of life. For the attainment of this, he presses forward in his pilgrimage, and endures even to the end. He is saved by hope. He is ever a follower of that which is good. Am I such?

FIRST. Then how *earnest* ought I to be! The prize before me is of incalculable worth. It is beyond my power to conceive its excellence, or value. The difficulties around me are many; and the snares to entangle me are continual. I have but a little period in which to finish my course, and to complete my journey. The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Within are fears, and without are fightings, every day. Heaven is all in earnest for my deliverance. Earth and hell are all in earnest for my destruction. O let me not be the only listless one! Me, for whom alone it is the personal, peculiar concern. How can I be too earnest in such a pursuit? How engaged are men in earthly things! How eager to attain

their measure of earthly goods! How active to avoid suspected loss! Let not the children of this world be so much wiser than the children of light. I have never yet been half awake in securing the interests of my soul's salvation. O let me arise, and call upon all that is within me, to engage with unrelaxing earnestness in this immense and glorious pursuit! I have no time for anything else.

SECOND. How *hopeful* ought I to be! I am the heir of an estate of priceless worth. It has been bought for me, secured for me, prepared for me, and is kept for me. And I am travelling rapidly on to take possession of it. I may arrive in my desired haven to-morrow. I may see all the glories of my inheritance before I see another earthly night. Ah, how animating the prospect! a voyage home, where so many wait for me, so many will welcome me, so many will bless me, so many will comfort me forever! I shall then go no more out. That finishes my pilgrimage, my doubts, my

contests, my difficulties, forever. Surely, if this is the fact, my condition is most hopeful and happy, and the state of my mind ought to be accordant with it. What reason have I for gloom, or despondency, or fear? I can adorn my profession, my avowed relations, only by the constant exhibition of an animated, hopeful spirit. This my Lord expects of me. This alone can make me useful to others. This my fellow-Christians have a right to expect of me. Why should the children of a king go mourning all their days? I am a follower of that which is good;—I will rejoice in the constant hope of it.

THIRD. How *watchful* ought I to be! My daily walk must be consistent with my avowed character. I must not dishonor my Ruler, nor my nation, nor my family, nor my own character, in this foreign land. My fellow-pilgrims need all the influence of my example. The world around me will form their opinion of the character of our Master and our home, by

their observations of our conduct. My Saviour must not be wounded in the house of his friends. My blessed hope must be the great argument for watchfulness against every temptation, and every evil. I cannot yield to sin. I cannot walk carelessly, loitering along the way. I cannot stop by the wayside. I must not break my ranks. I must abide by my standard. O let me set a constant watch over my eyes, that will not cease from sin,—over my tongue, that strives to break every bond,—over my heart, that true life may issue thence, —over all my members, that they may be servants unto holiness. Thus may I walk successfully, not overcome of evil, but overcoming evil with good.

FOURTH. How *useful* ought I to be? This is the purpose of my continued life on earth. I must be doing good while I dwell in the land. The partaker of such a hope ought be a blessing to many. A follower after such good ought never to be content to go alone.

How many around me are wandering in every path of ruin! Can I bear to see them go on unwarned? Can I behold, unmoved, the destruction of my kindred? Can I selfishly turn away my head, and try to forget their sad state, and say, "let me not see the death of the child?" Ah, what selfishness would be thus displayed! Why are friends and family given to me, and why am I made a follower of that which is good, among them, but that I should say to them all, "Come with us, and we will do you good?" My conversation, my example, my occupations, my tempers, my habits, my enjoyments, ought all to be inviting to them. Let me see how many I can attract to Christ,—whom I can lead to his feet. To whom I can tell in any way what a Saviour he has been to me. I would make this the great business and consideration of my life, to do good to all,—to do good to somebody all the time.

FIFTH. In *these* attributes would I shine. I

would be earnest, hopeful, watchful, and useful, in my whole pursuit of the good which my Saviour offers me. But his Holy Spirit alone can enable me to be so. I must seek his constant power and presence,—his daily, hourly influence upon my soul, to keep my mind set upon the good before me, and to make my heart active in its faithful pursuit. Thus my days will pass happily on, and every day bring nearer my glorious good.

Onward Christians, onward go—
Press to heaven through every foe;
Faint not, though the strife be long,
Soon will victory tune your song.

Onward then, to glory move,
More than conquerors ye shall prove·
Still through danger, toil, and woe,
Onward, Christians, onward go.

Meditation Forty-Fourth.

COMPLETE IN HIM.

Ye are complete in him.—Colossians, ii. 10.

Nothing could be more important to the Christian. Amidst all his infirmities and imperfections, his fears and cares, his consciousness of sin and mourning for guilt, he is still complete. He wants nothing. He may finish his pilgrimage with joy,—he may look forward without fear,—he may rest in hope,—he may rejoice in the glory of God. What an encouragement it is to him, in his dark and trying days! What a joy in looking forward to his departure! The whole work of his salvation is accomplished. The Saviour has undertaken and finished the whole amazing task; and to the struggling, faithful servant, it is given, to

believe, and hope, and triumph in him. I would consider the blessedness of this title for myself. Soon my earthly warfare will be completed, and I shall come to the last hour of my trial. Then Christ must be my all. He has always been so. He will not refuse to be so still. I am complete in Christ.

FIRST. He is all my *strength in life.* The life that I now live is by faith in him. I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. His perfect righteousness furnishes all my peace,—his secret strength enables me for every conflict,—his divine power carries me through every trial,—his gracious presence fills me with thankfulness and joy. Thus far has he led me on. All his ways concerning me have been good,—all his works regarding me have been gracious. His blood alone can cleanse my past sins,—he alone can set aside my guilt; and in him only can my works appear acceptable in the sight of God. But in him all this is possible and provided. Though I am wholly

weak, I cannot fear, because his strength is made perfect in weakness. Though I am completely vile, I cannot despond, because his merit triumphs over my unrighteousness. Though I have done nothing worthy of acceptance, I cannot doubt, because he can present me blameless before the Father. I want nothing, because he has everything; and though memory tells of nothing but guilt, faith tells of a Saviour who has blotted it out, and will not mention it again forever.

SECOND. He is *all my hope in death.* When I come to that hour, he will sustain me. He is perfectly able to do it. My confidence is in him alone. I shall finish my pilgrimage just as needy as I began it. Not one thing have I ever been able to lay up for myself. I shall come to its close in his own way; I know not, and I have no reason to care, how. He has ordered it. But whatever may be the instrument, or the method, he is the hope and the strength of my soul. When I stand on the margin of the

river, and look across, I will mention no other name than his. When I close my eyes upon every earthly relation, I will not despond. He is more than all, and cannot forsake me. Is my mind dark? I will look up to him. Is my conscience unhappy? Is my spirit fearful? Is my soul downcast? O let me look up to him! What can I want but him? There I am complete. Who can enrich me more? No; I will calmly, thankfully, lay me down in death, and take my rest, for he maketh me even there to dwell in safety.

THIRD. He is *all my prospect of immortality.* I shall live forever, because he has died. It would have been eternal death, but for him. I look forward with joyful confidence. I know that I am wholly guilty. The law will condemn me. The holiness of God must cast me out. Heaven cannot receive me. I can offer no one reason from my own life, to set aside this fearful result. And yet acknowledging it all, whom should I fear? Christ hath magnified

the law for me; he hath answered every charge against me; he hath prepared a robe of righteousness to cover me; he will claim for me the reward of his own obedience; he will certainly be justified; and I shall be justified in him. Thus a blessed immortality opens to me, and I am complete in him. Not a tongue can rise against me in judgment which he cannot set aside; not a demand can be made of me which he cannot answer. I will humbly, but boldly stand in that great day, to plead his spotless excellence, and to rejoice in the hope of his salvation; and I know that I shall not be confounded.

FOURTH. He is *all my glory in eternity.* The day will never come to me, that Christ will not be all. I must stand forever in grace. I must rejoice forever in the work of his hands. His presence is my heaven. His favor my life. Communion with him my happiness. Obedience to him my employment. Likeness to him my recompense and my joy. O how

glorious will be that everlasting day! I shall see him as he is. I shall be separated from him no more. I shall be made able to enjoy his glory. I shall be taught forever in the school of his Spirit. His countenance will be my book of study. His Spirit my unceasing teacher. The Father's glory shining in him, the great subject of my contemplation, and my learning. Yes; it is glory, — inconceivable glory! But all this glory is complete in him. Who else brings a single ray? Who else adds a single particle? What other name is ever mentioned in connection? To whom else is any portion of the honor to be ascribed?

FIFTH. This is the happy *issue* of my present journey. All its provision is in him. I am complete in Christ. As I travel onward, he is my strength. As I come to the termination, he is my hope. As I look forward, he is my prospect of acceptance. As I anticipate still further, he is all my glory. Yes; he shall be so. I will mention no other name. I will

not doubt his sufficiency, or question his power. I will strive, with my whole heart, to cleave to him.

Glory to thee, exalted Lamb!
Thou Holy God! Thou Great I Am!
With all my powers, thy grace I bless;
My joy, my peace, my righteousness.

Live, ever-glorious Saviour, live,
Worthy all blessing to receive;
Worthy on high enthroned to sit,
With every power beneath thy feet.

Meditation Forty-Fifth.

THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

The Glory of Christ.—2 CORINTHIANS, viii. 23.

THIS is a wonderful title as applied to guilty men. It enters into that within the veil. The people of Christ are for his glory forever. This was the great end proposed for their redemption. This has been the great object in view in all his personal dealings with them. This is the great final result which they are made to accomplish. All his works praise him. But his saints bless him with peculiar honor. They speak forever of the glory of his kingdom, and talk of his power, to make known the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Theirs is intelligent, voluntary, experienced praise. And the glory which they give is very

peculiar glory. But this title is given to them even now. They are the glory of Christ. This is the name by which the apostle would have them called. This is the description which he gives of them, as actually belonging to them. Does any one inquire concerning them? They are the glory of Christ. It seems almost presumption to appropriate such a title. But what blessing or name is there in the Gospel which would not be presumptive, did not the Lord himself direct it? Am I the glory of Christ? Yes, if saved at all. To whom else is the glory?

FIRST. *What an amount of guilt has he pardoned!* It is impossible to overstate this. No view that I can now take of it ascends to the truth. My original debasement,—my wayward youth,—my rejection of his love,—my rebellion against his authority,—my forgetfulness of his goodness,—my backslidings from his way,—my inconsistent profession,—my vain and sinful example,—the wickedness of my

unconverted state,—the errors of my renewed state. Alas! every day and every act brings up its separate testimony. And all condemn me. But he has freely pardoned. He has blotted out this whole fearful record. He will remember it no more. Surely this is glory. He will display it all, that all may see the riches of his grace in my forgiveness. Be it so. I know it is most disgraceful to me. But willingly would I come there and have it said, "There is the vilest and the most unworthy creature that has ever entered hither," so that Christ shall have all the glory of my forgiveness. My sin hath fearfully abounded. But his grace hath so much the more abounded, and the glory is his.

SECOND. *Through what trials has he brought me!* My whole life has been a contest with him. He has led captivity captive, in bringing me on to glory. All this will appear to his honor at the last. In how many afflictions has he comforted me! In how many conflicts

has he stood by me! From how many foes and dangers has he rescued me! How much has he endured in my own perverseness and unbelief! For how many years has he thus been contending with me, and triumphing for me! O it fills me with grief to look back and see how great my ingratitude and folly have been. But what honor he has brought out of it to himself! Surely there can be no such monument of grace beside. And when the whole work is done, and all my trials, and all his trials with me, are remembered and seen, it will be unspeakable glory to him, that he has carried me safely through. Was ever a bark so tossed and shattered upon the sea? Was it ever so unlikely that any one would get safely to the shore? But Christ has carried me through by his mighty power. And well may I praise him forever, and call myself the glory of Christ.

THIRD. *What abundant grace has he displayed!* His forgiveness, how full and free it

has been! No sin remaining. His justification, how complete! No defect uncovered. His sanctification, how perfect! No part of my character unrenewed. His fidelity, how unfailing! No hour of my pilgrimage unwatched. His forbearance, how tender! No error of my life remembered. His compassion, how affectionate! No sorrow of my heart unconsoled. His recompense, how abundant! More than I have power to conceive. What abounding grace has been thus displayed to a creature so completely vile,—so destitute of all ground of hope or claim in himself! I cannot know that such abundant grace has been displayed to any other. I cannot know that any other of his redeemed is so truly, and to such an extent, the glory of Christ. But well I know, that it appears impossible more grace should have been exercised for any than has been showed to me. O that I could ever give him all the praise for all his wonderful works of mercy to my soul!

FOURTH. *What triumphs has he accomplished for me!* Every difficulty was arrayed in his way, in bringing me to glory. And he has triumphed over all. My own sinfulness,—my hostility to him,—my just condemnation,—my extreme deceitfulness,—the opposition of the world,—the enmity of Satan,—the sorrows of earth,—the feebleness of the flesh,—the darkness of the grave,—the dominion of death,—all these have been conquerred, and conquered by him alone. Each one would have confounded every created arm. But all combined must yield to him. And he has done it. Surely the glory is his. Can any other creature have such reason to praise as I have? Can any redeemed sinner owe him so much, or be so really, the glory of Christ? O let me love him, praise him, adore him, with all my powers, and in all my being!

FIFTH. *These* facts mark his glory in me:—amazing guilt forgiven,—innumerable trials overcome,— unspeakable grace displayed,—

unceasing and eternal triumphs obtained. These make me the glory of my Saviour. These manifest the wonders of his love and power, as they are displayed in me. O, with the brightest, happiest hope, would I press forward to his rest and kingdom, and give him everlasting praise for all his love.

O my Saviour, Shield, and Sun,
Shepherd, Brother, Husband, Friend;
Every precious name in one,
I will love thee without end.

Meditation Forty-Sixth.

NAMES WRITTEN IN HEAVEN.

Your names are written in heaven.—St. Luke, x. 20.

THIS blessed title the Saviour gives to his disciples, as above all present gifts in value. They returned with joy from a successful exercise of their ministry. He lifted their minds to a higher privilege than that. He himself rejoiced over their possession of this privilege. It was the Father's gift. It was a special gift to his elect. The Lord knew them that were his. Their record was on high. But it belongs equally to the whole Church of the first-born. They are all written in heaven,—an imperishable record,—the Lamb's book of life. They are called by his Spirit on earth, according to this record. They are acknowledged,

when their earthly pilgrimage is passed, as the children of God, thus chosen and registered. He will own them as his, when he maketh up his jewels. It is an inestimable privilege,—a glorious prospect! Am I one of this recorded company? If I believe in Jesus, and love him, and follow him, I am. And how great are the blessings of it!

First. It may *satisfy me in every earthly trial.* I may be persecuted for Christ's sake,—my name may be reviled, and cast out as evil,—the reproaches of those who reproach him may fall upon me. Be it so. I have an imperishable record with God. Earthly hostility cannot erase it,—earthly sorrow cannot blot it out,—earthly judgment cannot reverse it. There it stands;—as much mine in the dungeon as on the throne. Christ's suffering flock have gone through much for him. So may I. But they have always been satisfied and comforted in the midst of trials, with the knowledge of their interest in him. Why may not I be? God

reveals in the hours of darkness special manifestations of his love to his people. It makes them know that they are his. I will be content in trial. If he will show his approving face, man may revile and persecute in vain. No scene of sorrow can be so dark, that an assurance of my imperishable portion in Christ will not cheer and enlighten it.

SECOND. It may *encourage me to trust entirely in a faithful God.* I will go on in the open path of manifest duty, whithersoever it shall lead. I will boldly acknowledge and follow my Saviour in the midst of a guilty world, whatever it shall cost. I may be often alone; but God will be ever with me. I may be often downcast; but Jesus will make unceasing intercession for me. I may be rejected among men; but the Holy Spirit will refresh me with grace from heaven. This is enough. I will trust in God, and not be afraid. I have one great treasure, which no power on earth can remove —my name written in heaven. What peace I

may enjoy! What confidence I may have in the hour of danger! What sure protection in the day of conflict! Who can harm me? Who can separate my soul from Christ? Who can change the record which God has made? Let my faith ever abide in its certainty; and my heart ever rejoice in the assurance which it gives.

THIRD. It may *comfort me with certainty of my rest.* I will think of it in my sorrows,—my name is written in heaven. These afflictions will only chasten and correct me. They cannot destroy me. Each new dispensation of trial helps me on to glory. Every cup which my Father mingles, must be a happy cup for me. My Saviour has gone to prepare my rest. Surely he knows what I need,—what will be suited for me,—what will be most adapted to promote my happiness. Who could prepare it better? He tasted of my infirmities,—he understands all my temptations,—he knows my nature perfectly; and when he prepares

my place, it must be the best possible place for me. Everything intermediate is temporary. Changes and successions will roll by me; but the end is fixed; the glorious issue is secure. And in all these successions, it is my blessed privilege to be comforted with looking forward to it. He who hath chosen me, and written my name in heaven, will carry me safely through. I shall come to his presence with songs and with everlasting joy upon my head. In this blessed hope, complete in him, and giving him all the glory, I will peacefully wait, and sincerely rejoice, all the days of my appointed time.

FOURTH. It may *urge me to a heavenly mind.* If I belong to that glorious assembly, I would walk, and think, and feel in accordance with my privilege. This is what I greatly need: a mind elevated above the vanities and cares of earth. My motives, desires, principles, meditations, all sanctified, all given to God. Then should I pass a peaceful, happy life,—undis-

turbed with storms, — unruffled by anxieties,—uninjured by contentions. Why should earthly things cast me down? Why should I be careful and troubled about them? I would fill up the duty of the day. Patiently bear its trials,—happily accomplish its usefulness,—gratefully enjoy its mercies. But I would never say, "Here will I dwell,—it is good to be here." No. My name, my home, my inheritance, my treasure, are all beyond. Like the swallow, I would dip in the stream, and fly onward. I would cultivate hopes, and thoughts, and desires above. Let me thus walk with God in newness of life, and strive in everything perfectly to do his holy will.

FIFTH. If my name *is* written in heaven, these are the characteristics which should mark me daily :—Satisfied in trial,—encouraged in faith,—comforted with hope,—spiritually-minded in the enjoyment of life and peace. Such are the proper marks of my high calling. Let me daily strive that they may be mine. Then

will my Lord not be ashamed to own my name in the day of his glory.

Here it is I find my heaven,
While upon the Lamb I gaze;
Here I see my sins forgiven,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

May I still enjoy this feeling,
In all need to Jesus go;
Prove his blood each day more healing,
And myself more deeply know.

Meditation Forty-Seventh.

BLESSED OF THE FATHER.

Ye blessed of my Father.—St. Matthew, xxv. 34.

Thus the Saviour calls his disciples in the great day of their account. He invites them to himself; he assures them of his acceptance; he welcomes them to his glory. They are the blessed of his Father. In their original election of God,—in their complete redemption,—in their safe passage through all the trials of earth,—in their individual preparation for the kingdom of God,—in their triumphant entrance to glory. All these are the Father's gifts. They are the acts of his own grace,—the accomplishment of his unchangeable purposes. Even now, in the prospect of that day, they may rejoice in this happy title. It is his

gift. It is no presumption in them to receive it, and to enjoy it. Am I one of this happy number? If I am truly a disciple of Christ, I am. Then as the blessed of the Father,

First. *I will not regard the opinions of the world* concerning me. It is a very light thing to be judged of man's judgment. On what insufficient grounds do they judge! By what an inferior and partial standard! With what prejudiced views and false opinions already made up! Why should I regard them? How transitory are the effects of their judgments! How unimportant upon the real interests of my being! I will cease from man, for wherein is he to be accounted of? He that judgeth me is the Lord. There every secret thing will be made known; and according to my real character, I shall have praise of God. Nay, even now, he judges me by his Spirit in my own breast. When man condemns, often he approves me there. I will strive to maintain a conscience void of offence toward him. I will

look forward to the hour when he will judge according to truth; and then I will be happy and contented, even under the reproaches of men.

SECOND. *I will strive to do everything as in his sight.* I will set him ever before me. In everything I will make it my object only to please him. He blesses me with his grace to aid me,—with his approval to encourage me,—with his providence to defend me,—with his acceptance to reward me. If I strive to approve my actions in his sight, my course will be easy, secure, and happy. I shall have but one opinion to follow; but one Master to obey. But his eye reaches my inmost thoughts. My most secret moments are all open to his view. How elevating is the habit of thinking of him, and remembering him! How purifying the remembrance of his character in connection with my own! How tranquillizing the recollection of his presence never withdrawn! My Father, who hath blessed me, is ever

about me. Let me never, then, display to him a sinful, selfish, or unholy walk; let me seek him with a praying heart; let me praise him with a grateful spirit; let me trust him with a thankful confidence; let me exalt him ever as my only Judge.

THIRD. *I will be contented with my portion of earthly trials.* No accidents can happen to me, —no changes but by God's own appointment. The Father who hath blessed me hath provided for me. He hath laid out the way which I am to pursue. Not a single sorrow can come unsent,—not one can come useless. He means that I shall get good out of all. Well, I will look forward to the glorious end. That will explain all. Whatever has been dark, or mysterious, or difficult, will then be understood and be perfectly satisfactory. The remembrance of this approaching hour shall make me daily satisfied with all the Lord's dealings concerning me. How soon it may be here! My days are fast hastening to meet it. O let me be

cheerful, happy, contented, rejoicing in the prospect of it. Happy, not only in what I now receive, but in the assurance that my Father hath blessed me forever.

FOURTH. *I will meet the hour of my departure with tranquillity and joy.* Why should I not? Will it not take me to my Father's house and my Father's presence? Is it dark in itself? It is trying to my human infirmities doubtless; it is always a serious and solemn event; it ought to be the subject of serious consideration and concern. But why should it be the subject of fear? God has pardoned me,—God has justified me,—God has adopted me,—God owns and guides me all through the perfect righteousness of his Son given to me, and by the power of his Spirit leading me;—and what enemy have I to dread? Will he lose any of his adopted family? Will he prove unable or unwilling to bear me safely through? O let me cast all idle fears away. Let me look constantly to the remaining rest, and to the excell

ing glory which he has set before me. Let me habitually feel that it is not death, but life eternal. Then my trials, labors, cares, and sins, will all be ended, and I shall be welcomed to a home from whence I shall go no more out. The Saviour says to me, in my hour of departure, "Come, blessed of my Father, enter into thy rest." It is a joyful prospect! Well may I triumph in it, and look forward to it with hope and confidence, and without fear.

FIFTH. What can be *more precious* than such an influence upon my life as this? Above human reproach,—setting the Lord ever before me,—contented in every trial,—tranquil in my prospect of departure. It is a heaven on earth, thus to live and feel. O let me attain and exercise this constant spirit. My Father will help, and keep, and bless me ever as his own.

See the haven full in view,
Love divine shall bear thee through;
Trust to that propitious gale,
Weigh thy anchor, spread thy sail.

Saints in glory, perfect made,
Wait thy passage through the shade;
Ardent for thy coming o'er,
See, they throng the blissful shore.

Meditation Forty-Eighth.

PARTAKERS OF THE HEAVENLY CALLING.

Partakers of the heavenly calling.—Hebrews, iii. 1.

How important to the people of God, is the recollection of their real condition! "Ye are not of the world," says their Divine Lord, "I have chosen you out of the world." They are in the world as their scene of duty and trial. But their home is not here. Their real connections are not here. They are partakers of flesh and blood, as descendants of man; but they are partakers of a divine nature, as the children of God. This constitutes the reality of their being and their true character. The remembrance of this should ever be effectual, as an encouragement to holiness,—as an incentive to duty,—as a stimulant to hope. They are

partakers of a heavenly calling. This is their common, united condition. If God has thus endowed me, I would feel it to be my highest, my only real treasure. I may well despise all other things.

First. It is a heavenly calling in its *origin*. All the blessings which the Gospel brings me are gifts,—free gifts. I did not make myself a Christian. I could not have done it. I was made so by the sovereign grace and mercy of my God. I did not first choose him, and of myself determine to belong to him. It was his own choice of me that made me so. All this course of meditations has carried me back to that one origin of all my mercies. God was pleased to choose me and to love me, long before I thought of him. Every spiritual blessing I have enjoyed has flowed from that choice. Am I a child of God, a servant of Christ, a vessel of mercy? It was the purpose of God I should be so. A calling arranged and settled in heaven—before it was revealed to me

complete in all the will of God; and to appear before him happily and at peace. Thus would I finish my earthly mission, growing constantly in a mind adapted to my heavenly calling.

FOURTH. It is a heavenly calling in its *results*. God hath chosen us unto salvation,—to be the heirs of his kingdom, which he hath promised. What glories hath he provided for them that love him! Triumphant issue of all the trials of earth. Perfect peace in the hour of departure. Assured acceptance in the presence of God. Rest and glory with a divine Saviour. Unveiled vision and enjoyment of the divine perfections. Glorious resurrection of the body from the grave. Partnership with Christ at his appearing and his kingdom. Everlasting fellowship with the triumphant Saviour and his redeemed. What wonderful results are these! But these are the promises to God's ransomed flock. These are the glories which the Gospel proclaims. These

are the recompense of a Saviour's work of obedience and suffering for his people. While he has called me to his service here, and enabled me to embrace this gracious calling; to these glorious issues he allows me to look forward. He permits me to call them my own. In dependence on his power and faithfulness, I may rejoice in the hope of them all. Why should I not? Has he not encouraged and commanded me to do so? Has he not adopted and renewed me, for this very end? O let me live in this happy anticipation, and strive to walk daily more accordant with it, in the whole current of my life.

FIFTH. How happy and precious is this calling! Heavenly in its origin, its agency, its exemplification, and its results! Surely if this is mine, there is nothing more for me to ask, or to desire. I can never want, while so enriched. Nor be cast down, while so exalted in the Lord. But it is not from me. It is not for anything that I have done. It is all a gra-

complete in all the will of God; and to appear before him happily and at peace. Thus would I finish my earthly mission, growing constantly in a mind adapted to my heavenly calling.

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are the recompense of a Saviour's work of obedience and suffering for his people. While he has called me to his service here, and enabled me to embrace this gracious calling; to these glorious issues he allows me to look forward. He permits me to call them my own. In dependence on his power and faithfulness, I may rejoice in the hope of them all. Why should I not? Has he not encouraged and commanded me to do so? Has he not adopted and renewed me, for this very end? O let me live in this happy anticipation, and strive to walk daily more accordant with it, in the whole current of my life.

FIFTH. How happy and precious is this calling! Heavenly in its origin, its agency, its exemplification, and its results! Surely if this is mine, there is nothing more for me to ask, or to desire. I can never want, while so enriched. Nor be cast down, while so exalted in the Lord. But it is not from me. It is not for anything that I have done. It is all a gra-

cious gift of God. And every good or useful act or attainment of my life, is a part of this divine and heavenly gift.

Dear Lord, if indeed I am thine,
If thou art my sun and my song,
Say why do I languish and pine?
And why are my winters so long?

O drive these dark clouds from my sky,
Thy soul-cheering presence restore;
Or take me unto thee, on high,
Where winter and clouds are no more.

Meditation Forty-Ninth.

PILLAR IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD.

A Pillar in the Temple of my God.—Revelation, iii. 12.

This is a final, glorious promise. It indicates a fixed and unchangeable state. He shall go no more out. There is an end forever to all falls in sin,—to all wanderings from God,—to all forsaking of the truth,—to all hostility against the redeemed soul. It is the last glorious result of the love of God, for the souls whom he hath purchased. It is the glorious issue of the Saviour's conquest for his people, and of the Spirit's triumph in them. They have now overcome. They are partakers with their Lord in all his glory. They abide in his presence. They rejoice in his kingdom, and their joy no man taketh from them. O how

unspeakably happy is this prospect! And of what consequence are all the toils and cares through which we may pass to realize it? Let all the saints of God rejoice and shout for joy in anticipation of the glorious day which God hath provided for them! Am I thus endowed and loved, and in possession of such promises! Let me thus consider them. A pillar in the temple of God!

First. A pillar is a *symbol of triumph.* And what a triumph has the Saviour accomplished for me! He spoiled principalities and powers for me, in his death on the cross, triumphing openly over them there. He has then triumphed over me by his Spirit, subduing my hostility, and leading me captive in subjection to his will. Then he has triumphed over the world around me, and led me safely through all its dangers and all its snares. Last, he has triumphed over death and the grave for me, and brought me with everlasting joy to his own abode. And now I am to be set

up as a pillar of triumph in the temple of God, that heavenly beings may behold his glory in me, acknowledge his power, and give him everlasting praise. O what songs of triumph will surround him in that great day! Every saint a separate illustration of his power. All the saints a combined demonstration of his all-conquering grace. O let my soul learn that blessed song, which gives all the praise to him who has washed me in his own blood, and made me a king and a priest unto God forever!

SECOND. A pillar is *an instrument of commemoration.* Thus does the Saviour set up his servants as monuments,—living monuments of his works of grace. What testimonies do they give! What evidences do they remain forever! In the history of each of them, what wonderful chapters have been written, and are to be read hereafter! What depth of original guilt! What amazing progress in voluntary transgression! What resistance of divine

favor and goodness! What mercies and love displayed to them! By what a price have they been purchased! By what power have they been rescued! Through what conflicts have they been carried! What forbearance have they received! What glory do they possess! These and more than these are all commemorated in the history of the saints. They are thus pillars of record. Upon them are inscribed such histories of grace and power as the universe has never seen but in them. O let me treasure up this thought, and commemorate all his goodness to me, day by day.

THIRD. A pillar is a *token of property*, and God's portion is his people. They are his inheritance. When they were robbed from him he rescued them, and brought them back to his own possession again. He has long and often contended for them. He has never yielded his claim to them, nor his right in them. And now he has obtained complete possession of them forever. They are in his

temple, and they go no more out. They are his property forevermore. And he sets them up as pillars, to give assurance of this fact. They are his, by every tie and right which can be conceived. He will never give them up. No one can pluck them out of his hand. Safe in his presence they abide eternally. Thus will he set me up. O I long to be his alone,—to have no other master, and no rival owner with him. Let him take me as I am, and do what he will with me. I will acknowledge his right. I will yield to his disposal. I will not resist his will. If in his own kingdom, he will own me as his, I will ask for nothing else. What else can I desire?

FOURTH. A pillar is *an instrument of support.* And the saints are thus pillars for God. They support the unity of his dominion. Angels and redeemed saints are joined together in one communion and fellowship. There is no division nor alienation among them. There is an end of all schisms in the body,—of all

separations of feeling or affection. Each saint is a cordial supporter of this happy union among the people of God. They unite in one song of praise. They engage in one heavenly worship. They surround one throne and one Lord in one common affection and obedience. The many tongues of earth are all forgotten in the one song of heaven. Each saint is a supporter of divine authority. There is an end to all rebellion. Every one has been brought back into glad subjection. And every thought of every one delights to obey. Heaven is the abode of perfect order and perfect submission. O that it were thus on earth! Let me strive in myself to make it thus, as far as I am concerned, before I go from earth. I would ever stand upon the Lord's side, and in perfect union with all his people.

FIFTH. Shall I be thus a pillar in the temple of God? Forevermore to display the triumphs of his grace,—to commemorate the

history of his love to me,—to proclaim his property in me, and to sustain his perfect authority over me, and over all his church. How glorious is such a prospect? Worth every labor and every sacrifice of earth. Gladly may I part with all things else, to gain it.

Blest inhabitants of Zion,
Washed in your Redeemer's blood;
Jesus, whom your souls rely on,
Makes you kings and priests to God.

Saviour, if of Zion's city
I, through grace, a member am;
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in thy name.

Meditation Fiftieth.

MORE THAN CONQUERORS.

We are more than conquerors.—Rom. viii, 37.

THIS brings out the glorious, everlasting issue. This is the full triumph of a Saviour's love. Now his work is complete. He is satisfied for the travail of his soul. He sees his elected host all secure. Of those whom the Father hath given him, none are lost. They stand before him washed, and justified, and sanctified forever. They are clothed in the garments of his salvation. They are covered with the robe of his righteousness. They are partakers of his everlasting glory. They are more than conquerors, through his love. How glorious, how animating is such a title! May I be permitted to claim and employ it? It be-

longs to the people of Christ. It is his gift to his chosen and redeemed flock. Why may it not be mine? Thus will I enjoy and improve it. But how am I more than a conqueror?

FIRST. My *enemies are all destroyed.* Enemies may be conquered, but still remain to rise again. The Christian's enemies are all finally destroyed. The last enemy that shall be destroyed, is death. When this is destroyed, all are so—every foe has passed away. Ah, how violent and powerful they seemed in the hours of my contest! How unconquerable they appeared, when Jesus undertook the work! How multiplied they were in each individual case! But there is now an end of them forever. Never will they rise again. Neither sin nor sorrow, Satan nor death, can again appear in opposition to the will and purpose of God. The snare is finally broken, and I am delivered. This, Jesus hath done. He hath subdued these hosts under me. By his power

I am carried through them all. And his glory shines in the amazing work.

SECOND. I *have recovered all that I had lost.* Complete possession of all that God originally gave, has resulted from the Saviour's victory. All my relations to God and heavenly beings are restored. All my own powers and nature are restored again to God. The life with God, which my sin had forfeited, the obedience of Christ has again obtained. I am thus re-instated in all my former possessions and hopes. Not every victory thus results. Human victories are often very partial,—leave much unacquired, and their gains are with great attendant loss. In my victory, there is no loss. Nothing is left behind. Not a wound has been endured unhealed, — not a suffering uncompensated. This is wonderful. The whole state of happiness and hope, which man unfallen enjoyed, or could have enjoyed, man redeemed receives again through the glorious victory of Christ. This entire recovery of

possessions makes me more than a conqueror. But this is not all.

THIRD. I have *attained far more than I had lost.* It was but the obedience of man which failed. It was but the reward of that obedience which was lost. But it is the perfect righteousness of God manifest in the flesh which is now received. It is the crown and glory which that deserves, which is now obtained. It is everlasting and all-glorious merit. The value of this is infinite. I cannot conceive its worth. It was a mere earthly paradise which I lost. But it is a heavenly inheritance which I have received,—an inheritance that the heart of man did not conceive. The glory of that earthly state of innocence was much; but the glory of this heavenly state of justification is far more. All human excellence is inferior to this divine excellence with which grace has clothed the believing soul in Christ. How exalted is this state! But it is the state of every believer in Christ. It is my

state, as the result of his glorious victories in my behalf. Yes, it is more than a conqueror. It is a divine bestowal of glories, that I could not have enjoyed, had not a new nature also been given me, with the victory which has put me in possession of the glory of God.

FOURTH. I shall *never lose again that which has been thus bestowed.* The Saviour's work is a final work. He has bestowed upon me all the glorious gifts of his grace, but he has not entrusted them to my fallible will. He keeps them, by his own mighty power, for me, that I may enjoy the benefit, but never have the hazard of their being lost again. All other victories are subject to future warfare and disputes. The victory of Christ for me leaves no question to be settled hereafter, and no future contest to be completed. Now, all is done. The work which his grace began, his triumphant grace perfects. My safety stands not in any wisdom of man, but in the power of God. All enemies are finally subdued under his feet,

and grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life. They which receive this abundant grace, and this gift of righteousness, reign with Christ forever. O, this is salvation and glory indeed! This is the triumph of the saints. This glorious victory is mine,—I will rejoice in it,—I will be strong in it,—I will be faithful through it to the end. The Lord help me and keep me, and let me see his great salvation!

FIFTH. This is a glorious close to my course of meditation. More than a conqueror,—Yes, every enemy destroyed. All recovered that I had ever lost,—more obtained than I ever before possessed. Nothing ever to be lost again. Surely, this is more than victory. But this is the conquest of Christ for his people; this is the conquest of Christ for me. I will bless him at all times. His praise shall ever be in my mouth.

Who are these in bright array?
This innumerable throng?

Round the altar night and day,
Tuning their triumphant song!

These through fiery trials trod,—
These from great afflictions came,
Now, before the throne of God,
Sealed with his eternal name.

Clad in raiment pure and white,
Victor palms in every hand,
Through their great Redeemer's might,
More than conquérors they stand.

Joy and gladness banish sighs,
Perfect love dispels their fears,
And forever from their eyes,
God shall wipe away their tears.

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